

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



SOUTH DAKOTA COOPERATIVES

**How Co-ops Have
Impacted the State**
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Ghost Towns
Pages 12-13

Where Your Electric Dollars Go



Tim McCarthy
General Manager/
Chief Executive
Officer

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com

In last month's column, I discussed the 2025 budget, which includes a rate increase in large part due to upward pressure on power supply costs. Approximately 60 percent of the Sioux Valley Energy operating budget goes towards paying for power – but what about the other 40 percent? The second largest cost – and 16 percent of the budget – pays for what we categorize as 'indirect expenses' which are interest on loans, depreciation, and taxes. Labor costs comprise around 13 percent of the Cooperative's operating budget.

Eight percent of the budget goes towards 'direct expenses'. These costs include day-to-day activities such as cable locating, right-of-way clearing, pole testing, member billing and postage, member meetings, community development, software, director expenses, building expenses, dues, and outside services. The remainder of the budget is the Cooperative's operating margin, which is required to meet our loan covenants and is returned to the membership on a capital credit retirement schedule.

If you break that down – over 75 cents of each dollar that you spend on your electric bill

goes towards paying for power supply, interest, depreciation, and taxes.

BREAKDOWN OF EXPENSES



Seventy-five cents of each dollar you spend on your electric bill goes towards paying for power supply, interest, depreciation, and taxes.

Our goal is to hold our distribution expenses (all the things you read about above) steady in 2025; however, as mentioned before, power supply costs are passed through to the membership and will likely lead to a rate increase in January.

Next month, we will explore the factors leading to the increase in power supply costs. Until then, enjoy the autumn months and if you are out in the field – Take the time; Every time – to check your clearances around overhead power lines and other electric facilities.

This harvest,
TAKE THE TIME.
EVERY TIME.
to look out for
overhead and
underground
utility lines.



SIoux VALLEY
ENERGY

TAKE THE TIME. EVERY TIME.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

SIoux VALLEY ENERGY

(USPS No. 497-440)

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- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

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

Celebrate and Win!

This October, we join more than 30,000 cooperatives across the U.S. celebrating National Co-op Month. It's a time to celebrate the power of co-op membership.

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit utilities that are built by the communities they serve. For Sioux Valley Energy, our mission is to serve our members; always. And because we are locally operated, we're uniquely suited to meet our members' evolving energy needs.

To celebrate National Co-op Month, we will be giving away an EGO leaf blower to one lucky member who registers. You can register by sending us the form below or go online at siouxvalleyenergy.com to register electronically.

All co-ops, including Sioux Valley Energy, are guided by seven cooperative principles that embody the values and spirit of the cooperative movement:

1. Open and Voluntary

Membership: Co-op membership is open to anyone who can use the co-op's services.

2. Democratic Member Control:

Members make decisions that shape the cooperative. Why? Because co-ops are created by the members, for the members.

3. Members' Economic

Participation: Members contribute money to the co-op to make sure it runs smoothly now and in the future. At Sioux Valley Energy, this happens through paying your energy bills.

4. Autonomy and Independence:

Co-ops are independent and can operate on their own, which ultimately benefits the members.

5. Education, Training and

Information: Co-ops continuously focus on education to ensure employees have the training and information they need to make the co-op successful.

6. Cooperation Among

Cooperatives: Co-ops share with and learn from other cooperatives. We help each other out in times of need because we want other co-ops to thrive.

7. Concern for Community:

All cooperatives work for the greater good of the local communities they serve. Co-ops give back to their communities to help them thrive and grow.

REGISTER TO WIN

To celebrate Co-op Month, we're giving away an EGO leaf blower. Register online at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com or by sending in the form below to win. The registration deadline is **October 31, 2024**,

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

Mail this form to:

Sioux Valley Energy, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017

FIRE SAFETY

Cooking and heating are the leading causes of home fires and fire injuries, and winter months are the peak time for fire-related deaths. **Fire Prevention Week (Oct. 6-12, 2024)** is the perfect time to review and practice fire safety.

Minimize Your Risks

The good news: Deaths from home fires in the U.S. have trended downward since the 1970s, according to Injury Facts, but even one death from a preventable fire is too many. While fire doesn't discriminate by age, it is the third leading cause of death for children 1 to 14.

When cooking, make fire safety a priority by keeping these tips in mind:

- Be alert; if you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol, don't use the oven or stovetop.
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, boiling or broiling food.
- Keep anything that can catch fire away from your stovetop.

Heating is the second leading cause of home fires. Follow these tips:

- Keep all flammables, like paper, clothing, bedding, drapes or rugs, at least three feet from a space heater, stove or fireplace.
- Never leave portable heaters and fireplaces unattended; turn off heaters and make sure fireplace embers are extinguished before leaving the room.
- If you must use a space heater, place it on a level, nonflammable surface, like ceramic tile, not on a rug or carpet.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- When buying a space heater, look for models that shut off automatically if the heater falls over.

Working Smoke Alarms Are a Must

About three out of five fire deaths happen in homes without working smoke alarms. Smoke alarms are a key part of a home fire escape plan providing early warning to reduce your risk of dying in a fire. The National Fire Protection Association recommends you:

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas on the ceiling or high on the wall.
- Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen, at least 10 feet from the stove, to reduce false alarms.
- Use special alarms with strobe lights and bed shakers for

people who are hard of hearing or deaf.

- Test smoke alarms monthly.
- Replace batteries in your smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector annually.
- Replace smoke alarms that are 10 or more years old.

When and How to Use a Fire Extinguisher

Always put your safety first; if you are not confident in your ability to use a fire extinguisher, get out and call 9-1-1. The American Red Cross cautions you to evaluate the situation and ensure:

- Everyone has left or is leaving the home
- The fire department has been called
- The fire is small, not spreading, and there is not much smoke
- Your back is to an exit you can use quickly

Remember the acronym PASS:

Pull the pin.

Aim low at the base of the fire.

Squeeze the handle slowly.

Sweep the nozzle side to side.

Source: National Safety Council



Power Line Safety "Watch Out for Power Lines!"

Archer Rindels, Age 7

Archer Rindels warns readers to be careful around power lines. Thank you for your picture, Archer! Archer's parents are Kyle and Rochelle Rindels, 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.

Delicious CHICKEN

CHEESY CHICKEN BUNDLES

Ingredients:

1 (11 oz.) can condensed cream of chicken soup
1/2 cup milk
3/4 cup Velveeta, shredded or cubed
1 (10 oz.) can chunk chicken, drained and flaked
1 (8 oz.) can crescent rolls

Method

Combine soup, milk and cheese. Heat until melted and smooth. Pour into a 7x11 inch pan that has been sprayed with vegetable oil.

Separate crescents into 8 triangles. Place 2 tbsps. of chicken on wide end of crescent roll. Pinch to seal. Place on top of sauce.

Bake uncovered at 375 degrees for 25 minutes and until golden brown. Serve with sauce on top.

Yields eight chicken bundles or four servings.

Janet Ochsner
Box Elder, S.D.

CROCKPOT CHICKEN PARMESAN SOUP

Ingredients:

3 boneless chicken breasts
1 tbsp. minced garlic
1 can crushed tomatoes (28 oz. can)
1 can tomato sauce (15 oz. can)
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. ground black pepper
2 tsp. Italian seasoning
4 cups chicken broth
1 cup parmesan cheese (freshly shaved)
1 cup heavy whipping cream
8 oz. rotini pasta (uncooked)
1 1/2 cup shredded Mozzarella

Method

Add the chicken breast, minced garlic, crushed tomatoes, tomato sauce, salt, pepper, Italian seasoning and chicken broth to the Crock Pot.

Cover Crock Pot with lid and cook on low for 6-8 hours.

Shred the chicken. Stir in the shredded parmesan cheese, heavy whipping cream and rotini pasta. Cover and cook on low for 30 minutes.

Top the individual soup servings with mozzarella cheese.

Kayla Beaner
Centerville, S.D.

BUTTER CHICKEN

Ingredients:

4 tbsps. Garam Masala blend
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 tsp. ground ginger
1/2 tsp. ground turmeric
1/8 tsp. crushed red pepper
4 tbsps. butter, divided
1 can (14.5 oz.) petite diced tomatoes
1 med. red onion, chopped
1 1/4 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1 inch cubes
1/4 cup heavy cream
1/2 tsp. sea salt

Method

Mix Garam Masala, garlic, ginger, turmeric and crushed red pepper in small bowl. Heat large non stick skillet on medium heat. Toast seasoning mixture 1 min. or just until fragrant, stirring constantly. Add 2 tbsps. of the butter to skillet, swirling to melt. Add onion; cook and stir 2 to 3 mins. until softened. Stir in tomatoes; cook 5 mins. Carefully transfer mixture to blender container; cover. Blend until smooth, scraping sides as needed. Return pureed sauce to skillet. Bring to simmer on med. low heat. Add chicken; cook 8 to 10 minutes or until chicken is cooked though, stirring occasionally. Stir in remaining butter, cream and salt until well blended. Simmer on med. low heat 2 to 3 minutes until sauce is slightly thickened. Stir in additional crushed red pepper to taste and serve with hot cooked basmati rice or warm naan bread, if desired. Garnish with fresh cilantro leaves, if desired.

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 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Working 'Co-op'eratively Together



Sheila Gross
Energy Services
Specialist

For info on electric vehicles and other technologies, contact Sheila Gross at sheila.gross@siouxvalleyenergy.com to learn more. Check out our rebates and incentives here:

Building, remodeling, or improving the efficiency of your existing home? When you take on those projects, you may work with a variety of contractors – a builder, electrician, HVAC contractor, or plumber. Relationships between area contractors and the Cooperative are crucial as we have the same goal – working ‘co-op’eratively together to serve our mutual customers well. Sioux Valley Energy is here to help! We believe in providing innovative solutions, efficient and technology-driven programs, and educational resources to better serve you and meet your current and future needs.

Heat pumps are one of the innovative solutions that are part of Sioux Valley Energy’s beneficial electrification programs. Although we don’t sell or install any heat pump equipment, we offer rebates and a reduced electric heat rate. Heating and cooling use the largest chunk of your home’s energy dollars. Heat pumps – geothermal or air-to-air systems including ductless options – are designed to be used in any home whether it’s new construction, a renovation project, or replacing existing equipment. Not only does

a heat pump provide efficient cooling in the summer; it also provides efficient heating in the winter to save you money. You can pair a heat pump with the backup system of your choice – electric, propane, or natural gas.


Educating members and the contractors you work with on the changes and benefits of today’s heat pump technology is important. Sioux Valley Energy is pleased to offer contractor heat pump training in partnership with Southeastern Electric Cooperative and Johnstone Supply. “Not Your Dad’s Heat Pump” will provide contractors with an overview of modern heat pump advancements utilizing inverter technologies and training on several different brands of live fire operating systems. If you are a homebuilder or contractor or employed by one, we invite you to join us on October 30 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 47077 276th Street in Sioux Falls. See the ad below for more details. You must register to attend.

Let’s work ‘co-op’-eratively as you start the planning process for your next project.

Contact SVE for more information on programs and incentives.



Attention Homebuilders & Contractors:



Not Your Dad's Heat Pump




A Guide to Modern Heat Pumps

Wednesday, October 30, 2024 • 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Southeastern Electric Co-op Sioux Falls Office
47077 276th St. (Intersection of I-29 & Exit 68)

For more information or to register, call 605-270-9430.

Heat pump technology continues to advance! These aren't your dad's heat pumps anymore. Join us for a free, 4-hour high-level discussion about the developments in heat pump technology and how heat pumps have evolved. A free lunch will be provided by RESCO while you learn about rebates and programs available from your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives. The afternoon includes 2 hours of training on several different brands of live fire, operating heat pump systems.

Sioux Valley Energy and Southeastern Electric Cooperative are Equal Opportunity Providers and Employers.



SAVE WITH THE CO-OP CONNECTIONS® CARD

The Co op Connections Card is a partnership between Sioux Valley Energy and local businesses! Each member can download the card for free on the app by scanning the QR code. You get your Co op Connections Card simply because you're a member of Sioux Valley Energy.



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

Commitment to Community



Alex C. and Peyton F. conduct high voltage trailer demonstrations at the Hartford Fire Department Safety Day.



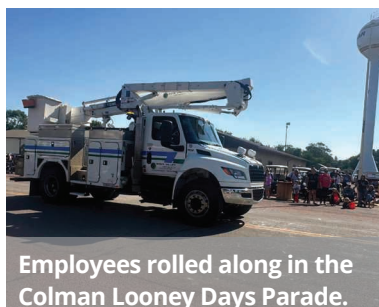
Reggie G. is ready to donate at the SVE employee blood drive.



Hundreds were served meals at the Sioux Empire Fair Ag Appreciation Lunch.



Journey lineworker Derek L. visited La Petite Academy with his Sioux Valley Energy bucket truck in August. The kids had a blast learning about electricity!



Employees rolled along in the Colman Looney Days Parade.



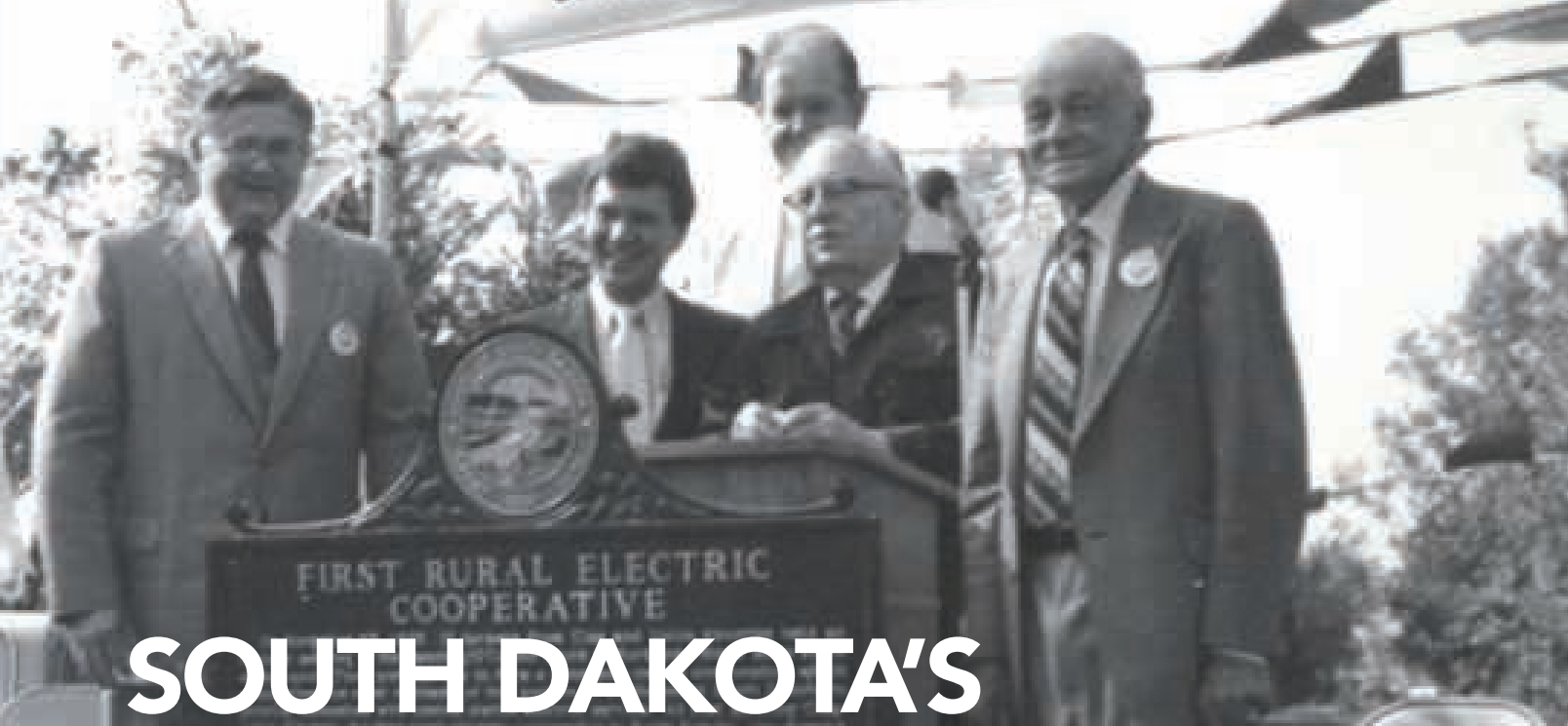
SVE Volunteers built fence at Rock Ranch near Hills, Minnesota.



NEW PAY BY PHONE NUMBER LAUNCHED

Paying your electric bill by our secure automated phone system has been an option for members for a while. Beginning September 5, the **NEW NUMBER** for members to call **TO PAY BY PHONE** is **855-939-3536**. Members should hear "Welcome to Sioux Valley Energy's IVR billing system" when calling. If you do not hear that first, hang up and dial again. Sioux Valley Energy also offers other payment methods, especially through SmartHub. Learn more by scanning the QR code.





SOUTH DAKOTA'S COOPERATIVES

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Picture life in rural South Dakota 100 years ago. Each morning, families woke before dawn to work by the flicker of kerosene lamps, hand-pumped water to fill a gas-powered wringer-washer, and retrieved breakfast ingredients from a dripping ice box. Looming in the backs of producers' minds were fears that the market would trend downward and they may not be able to cover their debts, or even harvest their fields.

Today, South Dakota's rural farmers and ranchers enjoy virtually all of the accommodations of modern living their suburban counterparts enjoy. Past luxuries like running water, full-time electricity, internet and telephone are now standard, and many farmers enjoy stronger economic security compared to the past's tumultuous markets.

That's because for over 100 years, rural South Dakotans have pooled their resources by forming cooperatives that level out some of the disparities between rural and urban life. Thanks to members' ingenuity, rural America is not just a viable, but a thriving place to live and work.

The First Cooperatives

The first cooperatives in South Dakota were agriculture-focused. Far too often, an

oversupply of goods led to price crashes, resulting in farmers unable to economically harvest crops or market livestock. This led to tremendous waste and crushed livelihoods.

As producers grew weary of the uncertain market, they organized to collectively market and distribute their products: they coordinated, shared risk and pooled resources.

South Dakota's earliest farm supply and marketing cooperatives started popping up a little after the turn of the 20th century. The South Dakota Secretary of State's office lists Lake Andes Farmers Cooperative, formed in 1909, as the oldest ongoing cooperative in the state.

During this early period, cooperatives operated in a legal gray area. Since producers working collectively in a cooperative setting could be viewed as monopolistic or collusive, they were under careful watch by the Federal Trade Commission as well as their larger competitors.

That changed in 1922 with the passage of the Capper-Volstead Act.

"Capper-Volstead allowed producers to come together and market their products and not be in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act," explained Brenda Forman, South Dakota Association of Cooperatives executive director. "[Cooperatives] were not considered to be a monopoly as long as they were a cooperative association formed

Clay-Union Electric Corporation was the first electric cooperative in South Dakota.

by producers, owned by the members, one member gets one vote in cooperative elections, etc."

The presence of ag cooperatives surged in the 1930s as producers looked for stability during the Great Depression, the South Dakota Farmers Union says. With effectiveness proven, the cooperative strategy has stuck around since.

Today, there are 63 farm supply and marketing cooperatives serving over 130 South Dakota communities, Forman said.

Those same visionaries who established the first ag cooperatives identified another need that was not being met. Using the same cooperative model that changed their lives once already, farmers would bring power to the prairie.

Electricity

Before energy infrastructure was widespread, many small towns in South Dakota relied on local power plants. However, with distribution lines only serving the city, living even a mile or two out of town was the difference between flipping a light switch and carrying a lantern.

Despite requests from farmers to run lines to their homes – some of whom even offered to pay installation costs – most municipalities and investor-owned utilities (IOUs) refused because undertaking the effort didn't lead to any meaningful profit.

Even many of the state's elected representatives seemed resigned to the idea

that the future of energy for their farming constituents was tied to on-site generation, like the modest Delco-Light plants that could power a few small appliances and light bulbs. To them, it seemed laughable that there was any feasible way to run lines in a state where the service would average out to a sparse 2.2 customers per mile of line, and for many, that was the end of the conversation.

The narrative changed when President Franklin D. Roosevelt expanded his New Deal programs to modernize rural America, creating the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) to finance ambitious projects.

The profit-minded IOUs were largely uninterested in expanding into sparse territory for measly returns, and little progress was made toward Roosevelt's vision.

In 1936, once it was apparent IOUs wouldn't be making the foray into rural territories as farmers had hoped they would, Roosevelt signed the Rural Electrification Act. Now, cooperatives could organize and receive REA loans while the IOUs idled.

A group of 17 farmers from Clay and Union counties jumped at the opportunity to finally bring their homes into the modern age. Just months after the REA was established, and at a time when just 5% of South Dakota farms had power, the group hatched out a plan to secure an REA loan for their newly-formed Fairview Rural Electric System, today Clay-Union Electric Corporation.

Going door to door and collecting \$5 sign-ons from neighbors ranging from ecstatic to skeptical, the cooperative finally got the REA's green light and received a \$70,000 loan to build 67 miles of line that would serve about 300 members, according to a 1936 Argus Leader report.

The success of South Dakota's first electric cooperative brought hope to still more than 90% of South Dakota farmers without power. It wasn't long before dozens more newly-formed cooperatives were each going door to door collecting sign-on fees to secure their own REA loans.

Serving Everyone

In 1946, roughly 10 years after the state's first electric cooperative debuted, rural farmers and ranchers from the state's

remote northwest corner met in Lemmon to form their own cooperative. The board understood securing a loan from REA to serve such a vast and sparse territory would be a big ask, so they opted to charge members a \$10 monthly minimum, which was twice the minimum rate of most South Dakota cooperatives, and equal to about \$170 today.

Even so, would-be members agreed to the terms of the longshot project and paid their \$5 membership fee. Despite federal hesitation about the feasibility of such a project, the REA loan was approved.

Grand Electric Cooperative received more than \$1.8 million over two loans that would build 1,127 miles of line and serve 948 members. The investment amounted to one of the REA's largest and riskiest yet in the state, but proved to be a success.

Cooperative members did the impossible; the wires in northwest South Dakota had finally been energized. Board members then eyed another ambitious goal – bringing telephone to Northwest South Dakota.

West River Cooperative Telephone Company was formed as a separate entity, but in the spirit of cooperation, the telephone and electric cooperative would be jointly operated. The two would, and still to this day, share a building, staff and infrastructure.

"Up here, we cover almost 8,000 square miles and have 4,000 miles of wire, but we only have 1,800 members," explained Eric Kahler, the cooperatives' joint general manager. "When you look at the economics of this type of service territory, if you're in the business to make money, you're not going to be too successful here. The cooperative model is really the only model that could work here."

And the community knows that fact and is grateful for their cooperative, says Patricia Palmer, who has spent much of her last 63 years working in Grand Electric and West River Telephone's member services.

"They're thankful," she said. "Very thankful. We have a terrific telephone work crew and line department. At times, they work tirelessly in horrible weather conditions... You can't believe the thank you notes that we get."

Growing up on a farm near McIntosh, Palmer has a firsthand account of the impact

of cooperatives. And she says it's one she will never forget.

The night she watched her family's farmhouse light up for the first time was also the beginning of a new chapter, she recalled. A chapter with an automatic washer, a refrigerator and a toaster.

As times change, cooperatives continue to be at the forefront of bringing service that might otherwise be out of reach.

"When I came to the cooperative, it was just telephone and electricity, and now we have high-speed internet and TV," Palmer said. "Over the years, the cooperative has really grown!"

Other Applications

The cooperative model is also used in many other sectors; there are 34 South Dakota credit unions that offer member-owners better interest rates and reduced fees compared to for-profit banks.

Even some rural water systems, while not wholly cooperatives themselves, borrow some of the cooperative fundamentals to make serving large areas more practical.

"Cooperatives are pretty significant in the impact they've had," Forman said. "And the other cooperatives we have – there are daycare co-ops, food co-ops, education co-ops – there's a number of different structures that the cooperative model has been used for, because of that ownership and one member, one vote."

Today, there are 141 cooperatives in the state, providing more than 78,500 jobs, \$2.8 billion in worker salaries and \$3.9 billion in gross domestic product (GDP), according to a South Dakota State University study titled *The Economic Impact of Cooperatives in South Dakota*.

That means cooperatives contribute almost 13% of South Dakota jobs, more than 11% of salaries, and 6.2% of the state's entire GDP.

"In a cooperative, your board is local," Forman said. "[The co-op board and employees] support and participate in sports functions, 4-H barbecues, you may go to church with them, or they may be at family dinner. Which means when something is a concern or challenge, you have somebody to go to and you have contacts close that know you and understand the system."

A photograph of three FFA members standing in a garden. On the left, a young man in a grey Under Armour t-shirt holds a large yellow pumpkin. In the center, a young woman in a pink shirt holds a long green zucchini. On the right, a young woman with glasses in a patterned top holds several red tomatoes. They are all smiling at the camera.

How Does Your Garden Grow?

Arlington FFA Chapter Partners with Arlington Backpack Program to Learn and Grow

A 100-foot by 150-foot garden plot on a farm just west and a little south of Arlington, South Dakota, yields not only produce but also lessons for the Arlington FFA Chapter and money for the Arlington Backpack Program.

Kelly and Donna Bittiker donated use of the plot of land to the FFA Chapter with the request that they use it to help out the Arlington Backpack Program. (The land had previously supported a pumpkin patch that was a fundraiser for the backpack program which feeds about 30 students during the school year.)

The FFA Chapter got busy planning and applied for a Sioux Valley Energy Operation Round Up® grant to help purchase garden equipment.



A black pumpkin grows on the vine.

Chapter officers speak with pride about what they're learning in the endeavor.

"We had to figure out what we wanted to plant, schedules for who would help weed, and figure out a watering system," said chapter treasurer Addison Marone, a sophomore.

The officer team explained the challenges of getting water from the hydrant located well south of the garden to the north-most stretches of the plot.

"We decided on a tank system with a battery pump so we could mix fertilizer in with the water," said FFA President Preston Singrey, a Cardinal senior.

"This is them doing it, not mom and dad," said FFA advisor Kelly Keller.

Along the way, chapter members learned first-hand about the importance of timely weeding, adequate watering, nuisance animals such as deer and a wandering chicken or two, and soil health.

"Some things are doing better than others," Marone said. Grasshoppers took a toll on the beans and peas that were planted.

"We've got butternut squash, tomatoes, we had a pumpkin plant, but it died," said chapter Secretary Kashley Goebel, also a sophomore. Gourds, black pumpkins and zucchini – lots of zucchini – made it to harvest.

Most of the garden's yields were sold Wednesday nights during the Arlington Farmer's Market. The students also

had a pop up stand during Arlington Days, the community celebration held in late July/early August.

The students even engaged in creative marketing when their five zucchini plants yielded more of the summer staple than they could sell. Their Arlington Days pop up shop included a bake sale featuring zucchini bread, zucchini bars, and other goods made with zucchini.

"We started giving away a zucchini with any purchase," Singrey said, laughing.

Looking to the future, the students are planning on doing soil testing on a section of garden that they left fallow in hopes of improving soil health.

While the produce sales might not have been as high as hoped, the students also took on another project to benefit the backpack program: Meals of Hope. The chapter raised \$8,000 and hosted a meal packing session in mid-August. Forty-five volunteers worked about two hours to package 24,000 meals. A portion of the meals will stay with the backpack program while others are headed to area food pantries.

Among the lessons learned in the garden: "What you put in is what comes out," said Marone.

Oh, and less is more when it comes to zucchini plants.



Above: The FFA officer trio stands in front of pallets of Meals of Hope meals.

Left: During the spring South Dakota FFA Convention, chapter members helped package 50,000 pasta meals for Meals of Hope. This summer, the chapter packaged 24,000 meals at Arlington High School.

Opposite page, top: Arlington FFA officers Preston Singrey, Kashley Goebel and Addison Marone, display some of the produce grown in the chapter's garden this summer.



Operation Round Up® is administered by a non profit trust, the Sioux Valley Energy Customers' Trust, which was initiated in the fall of 2000. The purpose of the trust is to acquire, accumulate and disburse funds for charitable and educational purposes as permitted by Section 501 (c) (3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. Your community, your school, and/or your nonprofit organization may be eligible for funding. Each quarter, the Board of Directors, volunteer representatives of each county, meet to review grant applications and make awards based on criteria guidelines of the Trust. Not all proposals are funded, and not all applications are funded at the full funding request.

The region served by the Trust includes the seven county Sioux Valley Energy service area, as well as adjacent neighborhoods within the outer boundaries of the Cooperative's service area. Money must also be spent within these boundaries. The electrical service area includes Rock and Pipestone counties in Minnesota, and Brookings, part of Kingsbury, Lake, Moody, and Minnehaha counties in South Dakota.

The major funding categories of the Sioux Valley Energy Customers' Trust include lending assistance to community service projects, economic development programs, education and youth initiatives, and emergency energy assistance. These funds are also available, should the need arise, to provide disaster relief.

Examples of the types of organizations who have received funding in the past are daycare associations, schools, nursing homes, sports clubs, vocational schools, youth groups, scholarship programs, humanity programs, fire departments, cities, special needs for individuals, and senior dining programs.

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

GHOST TOWNS

South Dakota's History Remembered

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Scattered across open fields and through narrow mountain gulches, a careful eye can spot many of South Dakota's nearly 250 long-lost prairie villages and prospecting towns.

Many of these communities were once thriving outposts, railroad hubs, farming villages and mining towns, but were dealt their final blows by the hardships of the dust bowl, changes to railroad systems and the depletion of natural resources.

Most of the towns are long forgotten, their existence marked only by the rotted shell of an old wood barn or a crumbling foundation poking up from the ground.

Thanks to the work of local historical societies who have pieced together the history of the communities' "booms and busts" through old newspaper clippings, plat maps and land records, we can get a glimpse into the lives of the first rural South Dakotans and learn about the communities that once bustled with life.

Galena

Unique among a cavalcade of abandoned Black Hills gold-rush towns, Galena's roots are in its silver. The town was settled in the late 1870s after prospectors Patrick Donegan and John F. Cochran discovered layers of lead and silver ore near Bear Butte Creek while searching for gold deposits.

The U.S. government removed the two men from the area in accordance with Native American treaties. However,

their exile turned out to be short-lived. Donegan and Cochran returned shortly after to mine their claim as more and more gold-hungry settlers tested the increasingly unenforceable treaties.

The claim, which would later become the Sitting Bull mine, turned out to be a mother lode, according to Galena Historical Society member Jeff Jacobsen.

Over the next several years, other mining operations popped up in the gulch as the miners' families made Galena their new home. The town soon had multiple houses, a hotel, restaurant, stores, a catholic church, cemetery and school, attracting new settlers through its peak between 1881 and 1883.

Arriving from Chicago in hopes of expanding his fortune, Col. John Davey soon became a Galena mining heavyweight, buying up claims along the Bear Butte Creek, including the Sitting Bull claim.

Davey's more than 125-man operation was running smoothly until trouble arose from a claim dispute. The owners of the nearby Richmond claim suspected Davey was digging too far into the hill and mining their silver. Davey claimed he was following the path of the ore, which according to mining law, he was allowed to follow onto another claim. The Richmond claim owners said the law didn't apply to a horizontal blanket formation of ore, like the one in Galena.

A lengthy court battle ensued, and the judge shut down the Sitting Bull mine

until the ruling. Galena was suspended in controversy as many of the townsfolk found themselves out of work.

Thus began Galena's rocky "boom and bust" cycle, Jacobsen explained.

"The boom time was when Col. Davey and other mines were producing, and then the lawsuit shut that down and you have a bust," he said.

The judge ruled against Davey, and the operation never recovered. Galena would never again be the bustling town it was in the early 1880s.

"In 1892, some more people came into town and tried to start up again, so that was a boom, and then they went bankrupt, so there's a bust," Jacobsen continued. "There's like three or four cycles like that in Galena."

By the mid 1930s, the town had seen its final bust. The mining wasn't comparable to the riches of the past, and interest in the gulch slowly started to fade. The tracks were removed and the school house closed in 1943.

Today, Galena is the best-preserved Ghost Town in South Dakota. On the second Saturday of each June, visitors can tour the town, visit the maintained graveyard and go inside the newly-restored schoolhouse, courtesy of the Galena Historical Society.

"It just kind of stands out," Jacobsen said. "Galena is just one of the very few silver mining areas in the Black Hills when almost everyone else was trying for gold."



Galena School
Photo Credit: Galena Historical Society

Did You Know

In 1947, Deadwood resident Ollie Wiswell came across an orphaned coyote pup while he was out on a hike. He gave the pup, named Tootsie, to Fred and Esther Borsch of Galena. Tootsie gained fame as the mascot for the Borschs' Deadwood liquor store, famously appearing on the store's sign. Fred taught Tootsie to howl along to his singing, and the two recorded the album "South Dakota Tootsie."

Tootsie, at this point a South Dakota mascot, rode through parades, was featured in an airline advertising campaign, and even embarked on a nationwide tour where she visited the White House and performed for President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Vice President Richard Nixon.

Gov. George Mickelson, a fan of Tootsie himself, signed legislation in 1949 making the coyote the state's official animal. Tootsie died in 1959 and is buried near her home in Galena.

Argonne

About nine miles northwest of Howard, just off state Highway 25, lay the remains of the ill-fated farming community, Argonne.

Marked by a blue historical sign, travelers-by can catch a glimpse of the town's massive cement bank vault with its swinging iron door, an old silo bearing the town's name, several concrete foundations, and a house falling into its own footprint.

The town's founder, Dr. Louis Gotthelf, was a Prussian-born physician who emigrated to the United States in the aftermath of the Prussian revolution. Gotthelf staked his claim in 1881 and established the townsite in 1886.

The town was originally called St. Mary's, named after Gotthelf's daughter, and was strategically positioned along the Chicago and North Western railroad, with the streets running parallel to the railroad rather than the traditional east-west layout. Confusion with another St. Mary's led to the residents voting to change the name to Argonne in 1920, which was chosen to honor local soldiers who had served in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive during World War I.

Despite having what should have been a prime location, Argonne failed to grow to Gotthelf's satisfaction, and he left with his family for Parker in 1889.

A 1919 land boom in South Dakota finally turned things around for Argonne, Miner County Historical Society member George Justice Forster said.

"Most of the growth that happened initially was when it kind of took off as a

trade center," he explained. "Suddenly the town had a railway depot, lumberyard, farmer's cooperative and general store."

In the early 20s, Argonne's population boomed to about 100 residents, and the town offered new amenities including a school, blacksmith and post office.

Argonne's peak was short-lived, and by 1930 the population had fallen to about 65 residents.

When Doug Jerlow moved to town in 1953, much of what was built in the town's prime was left abandoned, and most of the businesses that did remain were struggling.

"It was past the peak," Jerlow recounted. "One general store closed when the post office inside it closed, and that was an elderly lady who ran that and lived in a house by herself. The Haxby family's store was open for maybe a year or two after that."

Though the town was facing a bleak outlook, there remained one huge point of pride for Argonne: high school basketball.

Delbert Gillam, also known as the

Argonne Ace, led the Argonne Arrows to a 10-1 start in his junior year in 1953. Gillam also broke the state record for the most points scored by a player in a single game, making 31 field goals and 10 free throws, scoring 72. Argonne still holds this record.

The high school closed in 1956, but the community limped on for a few more years before the grade school closed in 1970 when the railroad picked up and left.

Doug Jerlow's family, the last residents of Argonne, left town that same year.

Jerlow pointed out that while many other communities along the rail line like Unityville, Canova, Carthage, and Esmond struggled to recover from the abandonment of the line, for Argonne, it was the death blow.

Now, Forster and other members of the Miner County Historical Society are working to preserve the history of Argonne.

A historical marker will soon be placed east of Argonne on state Highway 25 that will tell the story of Argonne from its founding to its final household.

Though Jerlow now lives near Madison, he still farms near Argonne and owns most of the former townsite. As the unofficial mayor of Argonne, as Jerlow sometimes calls himself, he wants to keep the memory of his childhood hometown alive.

"It was just a nice community to grow up in," he said. "Those small communities, I think it's becoming harder to find them anymore."





Plan on Safety This Harvest Season

Harvest is upon us and Sioux Valley Energy would like to remind local farmers to stay safe this season. Overhead power lines can be easily overlooked and deadly if ignored. While you focus on getting those crops out of the ground, your local electric cooperative urges you to review these important tips.

BE ALERT

Awareness doesn't spread as fast as an electrical current, but a little goes a long way. Remember to look up and look out for power lines this harvest season. Follow these Four S's to Stay Safe.

- **STAY ALERT.** Avoid distractions when operating farm equipment. While harvest days can run long, failure to be aware of your surroundings can lead to power line contacts and other accidents.
- **SLOW DOWN.** Cold weather often delays harvest in our region. If you get in the fields later than you had hoped, avoid the temptation to rush through your work. Slow down and stay safe.
- **STUDY.** Educate yourself on any new equipment you may have purchased recently. New equipment has higher antennas and attachments than ever before. What cleared power lines in previous years may not in your new ride. Know what you're working with.
- **SEARCH.** Sometimes trees or brush can make power lines difficult to see. Don't just glance up, really take a minute to search your surroundings when moving equipment.

BE PREPARED

Hitting a power line can be scary. In certain situations, there may be a lot of noise, which may spur your instinct to

run – you've got seconds to understand what's happening and respond appropriately. Do you know what to do if you come in contact with a power line?

- **STAY PUT.** Unless there is a fire, you need to stay calm and stay in the vehicle. Touching the ground and the vehicle at the same time (i.e. stepping out of the equipment) can be deadly. Don't risk becoming a conduit for the electricity to move from the vehicle to the ground through you, stay put. Even if it's loud.
- **CALL FOR HELP.** Call for help from the vehicle if possible. 911 is a good place to start, especially if you don't know your local electric cooperative's number. If you don't have your phone, try radioing for help. If someone comes to assist you, they need to stay at least 40 feet away from the vehicle until professional help has arrived.
- **JUMP CLEAR.** If there is a fire forcing you to leave, jump clear of the equipment. Jump with your feet together, as far away from the vehicle as possible. Be sure that no part of your body touches the equipment and the ground at the same time. Then, shuffle (tiny, quick steps) or hop with your feet together at least 40 feet away. Electricity spreads through the ground in ripples. Keeping your feet together prevents one foot from stepping into a higher voltage zone than the other foot, which could cause electrocution. Stay away from the equipment and keep others away until the authorities tell you it's safe to return.

Remember these life-saving tips while working in the fields this fall and help spread the word about the dangers of large farm equipment and overhead power lines. Together, with the power of prevention, we are re-energizing farm safety.

IS YOUR CONTACT INFO UPDATED?

Do you want to receive your newsletter electronically?

Don't miss out on important outage messages and other information. Call us at 800.234.1960 or reach out through SmartHub to update your phone number or email address.

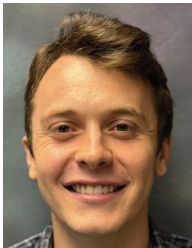


Visit us at: www.sioxvalleyenergy.com

Berninzoni joins Sioux Valley Energy

In August, Sam Berninzoni joined the workforce at Sioux Valley Energy as the Environmental Specialist.

Sam is originally from Colorado and is an Augustana University graduate.



Sam Berninzoni
Environmental Specialist

UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

If you are having trouble paying your electric bill, the following assistance programs may be able to help. Members need to call the agencies directly to apply for assistance. Sioux Valley Energy's goal is to help you avoid disconnection of electric service, so please call us at 1-877-511-8062 so we can work together to develop an acceptable payment plan.

BROOKINGS COUNTY SOUTH DAKOTA

| | |
|--|----------------|
| LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program .. | 1-800-233-8503 |
| Brookings County Welfare Office..... | 605-696-8261 |
| Brookings County Community Action | 605-692-6391 |
| Brookings County Salvation Army | 605-219-8970 |
| My Neighbor | 605-691-3225 |
| First Call for Help | 211 |

KINGSBURY COUNTY SOUTH DAKOTA

| | |
|---|----------------|
| LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program . | 1-800-233-8503 |
| Interlakes Community Action | 1-605-854-3701 |
| First Call for Help | 211 |

LAKE COUNTY SOUTH DAKOTA

| | |
|--|----------------|
| LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program .. | 1-800-233-8503 |
| Interlakes Community Action | 605-256-6518 |
| Lake County Welfare..... | 605-256-7619 |
| First Call for Help | 211 |

MOODY COUNTY SOUTH DAKOTA

| | |
|--|----------------|
| LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program .. | 1-800-233-8503 |
| Interlakes Community Action | 1-605-256-6518 |
| Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribal Office | 605-997-3891 |
| First Call for Help | 211 |

MINNEHAHA COUNTY SOUTH DAKOTA

| | |
|---|----------------|
| LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program | 1-800-233-8503 |
| Minnehaha County Human Services | 605-367-4217 |
| Minnehaha Community Outreach | 605-331-3935 |
| Minnehaha County Salvation Army | 605-332-2331 |
| Sioux Falls Interlakes Community Action | 605-334-2808 |
| First Call for Help | 211 |

PIPESTONE COUNTY MINNESOTA

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Southwestern MN Opportunity Council | 1-800-658-2444 |
| Southwest Health & Human Services..... | 1-888-837-6713 |
| The Salvation Army Heat Share..... | 800-842-7279 |
| Pipestone County Veterans Administration | 507-825-1171 |
| MN Department of Energy Services | 800-657-3710 |
| First Call for Help | 211 |

ROCK COUNTY MINNESOTA

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Southwestern MN Opportunity Council | 1-800-658-2444 |
| Southwest Health & Human Services..... | 1-888-837-6713 |
| The Salvation Army Heat Share..... | 800-842-7279 |
| Rock County Veterans Administration | 507-283-5061 |
| MN Department of Energy Services | 800-657-3710 |
| First Call for Help | 211 |

SEPT. 14-OCT. 27
Mazing Acres Fall Festival

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
30851 433rd Ave.
Yankton, SD
605-760-2759



SEPT. 28
Roast Beef Supper
West Nidaros Lutheran Church
Rural Crooks, SD
605-212-5730

OCT. 4-5
Holman Acres Pumpkin Fest and Vendor Show
Philip, SD
605-441-1060

OCT. 4-5
25th Annual Pumpkin Fest
Webster, SD
<https://webstersd.com/home>

OCT. 5-6
Run Crazy Horse Marathons
Crazy Horse
605-390-6137
www.runcrazyhorse.com

OCT. 5-6
Magic Needlers Quilt Show
Codington County Extension Complex
Watertown, SD
605-881-3273

OCT. 5-6
The Black Market
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
Sioux Falls, SD
605-332-6004

OCT. 6
Giant Pumpkin Festival
Bentley Memorial Building
Bison, SD
Enter Pumpkins by 11:30 a.m.
605-244-5475

OCT. 10-11
Rural Women in Agriculture Conference
Oct. 10 from 1-9 p.m.
Oct. 11 from 7 a.m.-3 p.m.
The Lodge of Deadwood
Deadwood, SD
SouthDakotaWomeninAg.com

OCT. 11-12
Junkin' Market Days
Ramkota Exhibit Hall
Sioux Falls, SD
605-941-4958

OCT. 19
Buffalo County Fall Ball
Live Music and Food
8 p.m.
Fire Hall
Gann Valley, SD

OCT. 25-27
Forest of Fears Haunted Trail
7 p.m.-10 p.m.
Reclamation-Ranch
40787 259th St.
Mitchell, SD

OCT. 26
Hill City Children's Boo Bash and Pumpkin Festival
Hill City, SD
605-574-2368

OCT. 26
Hartford Women of Today Fall Craft Fair
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
West Central Becker Center
Hartford, SD
605-359-2049

OCT. 26
Owl-O-Ween
Noon-5 p.m.
Black Hills Raptor Center
Caputa, SD
605-391-2511

OCT. 31
Treat Street
5:30 p.m.-7 p.m.
Main St.
Milbank, SD
605-432-6656
MilbankSD.com/Chamber

NOV. 2
Fall Fling Craft Show
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Dakota Christian School
Corsica, SD
605-366-7940

NOV. 2
Reliance Christmas Carousel
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Legion Hall
Reliance, SD
605-730-0553

NOV. 22-23
Holiday Arts Christmas Craft Show
Davison County Fairgrounds
Mitchell, SD
605-359-2049

NOV. 30
A Hometown Christmas Market
2 p.m.-6 p.m.
Main St.
Elk Point, SD

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

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