

SIOUX VALLEY ENERGY

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Spirit of Giving: Co-op Connections Card Helps Members Save



Tim McCarthy General Manager/ Chief Executive Officer

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Holiday celebrations may be wrapping up, but Sioux Valley Energy is still in the spirit of giving! In this edition of the newsletter, you will find a special "gift" from Sioux Valley Energy that can help you all year long, not just during the holidays - the Co-op Connections Card.

Sioux Valley Energy is a Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, and one of the many benefits of being a Touchstone Energy Cooperative is that we can take part in the Co-op Connections Card program. This program offers a tangible

"In this edition of the magazine, we have inserted a list of all the local businesses that are offering our members a special discount."

asset for our members. It provides local, regional and national discounts for goods and services. These partnerships help members realize immediate benefits of being a member of a Touchstone Energy Cooperative.

So what does Touchstone Energy exactly mean? A touchstone is a rock that was used to identify precious metals such as gold – it was basically the gold standard for miners. When we use the word touchstone today as a metaphor, it refers to a test or criterion for the qualities of our organization.

Over 20 years ago, a group of electric cooperatives banded together to develop a network that would help make co-ops stronger and develop a "gold-standard" for their industry...they called themselves "Touchstone Energy" Cooperatives. Launched April 4, 1998 the brand is always evolving to better meet the needs of co-ops. Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives' programs support communications, economic development, strategy execution, community engagement, and residential energy programs.

The founding values of Touchstone Energy still resonate nearly two decades later integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. These four values are the foundation of every service we provide our members each day.

Touchstone Energy Cooperative Inc. is a national network of electric cooperatives across 45 states that provides resources and leverages partnerships to help member cooperatives and their employees better engage and serve their members. By working together, Touchstone Energy cooperatives stand as a source of power and information to their 30 million member-owners every day.

In this edition of the magazine, we have inserted a list of all the local businesses that are offering our members a special discount – it's a benefit you receive for being a member of a Touchstone Energy Cooperative! Keep the holiday spirit alive all season long and continue shopping locally to support businesses in your community!

COOPERATIVE

CONNECTIONS

SIOUX VALLEY

(USPS No. 497-440)

Board President: Gary Fish **Board of Directors**

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Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections is the monthly publication for the members of Sioux Valley Energy, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017. Families subscribe to Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. The purpose of Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections is to provide reliable, helpful information to Sioux Valley Energy members on electric cooperative matters and better living.

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

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

How to contact us: Phone: 1-800-234-1960

e-mail: sve@siouxvalleyenergy.com Website: www.siouxvalleyenergy.com

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

Sioux Valley Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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 (Gary 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:

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. Interested members are encouraged to contact Brenda Schelhaas. Executive Assistant. All Board seats elected in 2022 will serve three-year terms.

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



Jan. 14 deadline for scholarship applications

Children or dependents of a Sioux Valley Energy member have until 4:30 p.m. Jan. 14 to turn in their applications for \$16,000 worth of scholarships for eligible graduating high school seniors or first-time attendees at an institution of higher education.

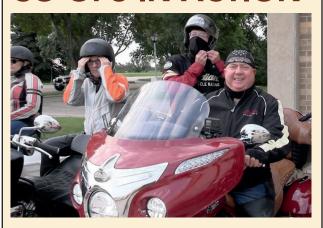
Applications are available online at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-community/ scholarship-program

Crunch the numbers on New Year's savings in your home

If your New Year's resolution to spend less and save more always fizzles out by March, don't fret. With a few simple adjustments in your house, you can save money on your energy bill each month. Here's how:

- Save up to 20 percent on heating by installing a programmable thermostat and setting it to automatically lower the heat when you leave the house for more than five hours and when the family goes to bed for the night.
- Save 1–3 percent on heating costs for each degree you turn the thermostat down. For optimal savings, set the thermostat at 68 degrees while at home and 65 degrees at night and before you leave the house for an extended period.
- Save up to 20 percent on heating and cooling bills by sealing air leaks around doors and windows with caulk and weatherstripping. This inexpensive energy saver will pay for itself within a year.
- Save at least 25 percent on air conditioning when you replace your old, inefficient central AC with one that has a seasonal energy-efficiency ratio of 14 or higher.
- Save up to 40 percent on what you spend to run your refrigerator by replacing an old unit with a new Energy Star-certified model.
- Save more than 50 percent on energy for cooking when you use a microwave oven instead of a conventional oven to heat meals.
- Save more than 10 percent on your water heating bill by lowering the water heater temperature from 140 degrees to 120.
- Save 75 percent or more on energy for lighting by replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs. They also last about 25 times longer. Switching out CFLs for LEDs will reduce lighting costs as much as 50 percent.
- Consistently turning off lights when not in use or when natural light is sufficient can reduce lighting expenses 10-40 percent.
- Enable the power management function on computers and sleep setting on appliances.

CO-OPS IN ACTION



South Dakota's electric cooperatives deliver affordable, reliable power to our members in every corner of the state. But we do so much more!

Visit our Co-op Connections Plus YouTube channel and you'll see co-ops in action at local community events, youth

leadership programs and charitable fundraising events like the annual Line Patrol Charity Ride. We've got South Dakota covered!

Simply scan the QR code to the right and be sure to subscribe!



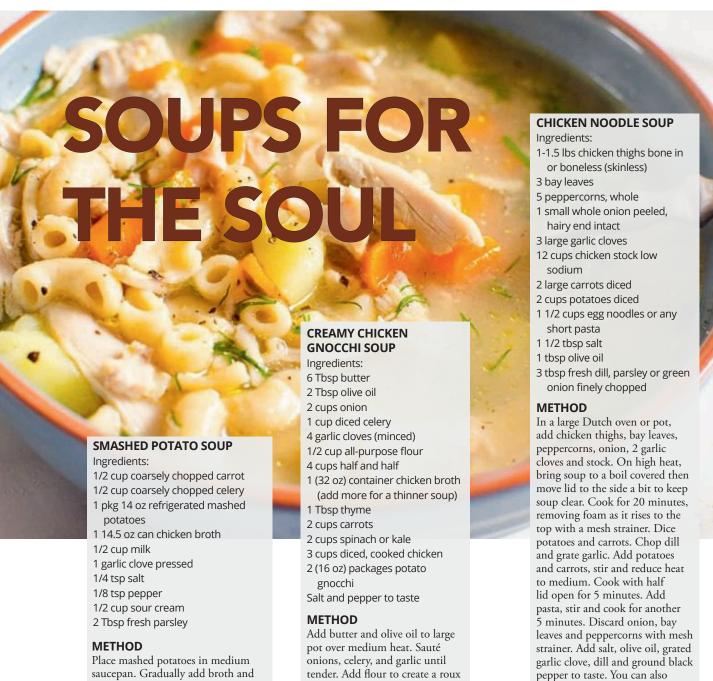


Keep out of power boxes

Trinity Kurtenbach

Trinity knows that those green "power boxes" that are often seen near homes or along roadways contain electri cal equipment that can pose a hazard. Trinity is the child of Cory Kurtenbach and Tonya Buchholz-Froehlich of Nunda and attends Sioux Valley Elementary in Volga. 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.



milk, whisking until mixture is smooth. Stir in carrot, celery, garlic and salt and pepper. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, 10 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in sour cream and parsley. Top with desired toppings. 4 servings; 5 cups. Optional toppings: sliced green onion, shredded cheddar cheese, cooked, crumbled bacon.

Becki Hausser, Tripp

and stir for one minute. Slowly add the half and half and chicken broth. Stir until it thickens. Add the thyme, carrots, spinach, chicken and gnocchi. Cook for 5-10 minutes until gnocchi is cooked and soup thickened. If soup gets too thick just add more chicken broth. Salt and pepper to taste.

Tracey Burkett, Olivet

shred chicken right in the pot. Let sit covered for 5 minutes.

ifoodreal.com

Please send your favorite soup 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 2022. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.



Space heaters are generally not the most cost-effective option when it comes to electric heat. Sioux Valley Energy recommends installing an even more efficient system—either an air source heat pump or geothermal unit.

NO SUCH THING AS A MIRACLE HEATER

Tim McCarthy

tim.mccarthy@siouxvalleyenergy.com

Members are always looking for ways to lower heating bills, including purchasing space heaters that claim significant savings. While electric heat is a great choice, there are a few things to consider before purchasing a space heater.

RELYING ON SPACE HEATERS MAY DISAPPOINT

This colder weather makes the staff here at your cooperative brace for calls from members concerned about the higher bills. I will concede that some of those calls will come from disappointed members who expected to save money by relying on space heaters to heat their homes. Let's talk about heating your home in general and the use of electric space heaters.

BEST WAY TO HEAT IS SEALING HOME'S ENVELOPE

Space heaters are generally not the most cost-effective option when it comes to electric heat. We recommend installing an even more efficient system-either an air source heat pump or geothermal unit. Beyond installing an extremely efficient HVAC system, you can seal up the cracks. Sioux Valley wants its members to recognize their home is a living and breathing system. The best way to heat (or cool) your home is to seal the home's envelope and use a properly installed and efficient whole house system.

NO SUCH THING AS MIRACLE **HEATERS**

Turning our focus to space heaters, I want to make one thing clear to our members. Now, this may upset some salespeople and

manufacturers out there but here goes....there is no such thing as a "miracle heater." Yes, I said it! These in-home fliers, magazine and newspaper advertisements (designed to resemble news articles), e-mail blasts, TV infomercials, and mall kiosks are marketing efforts designed to do only one thing and that is separate you from your hard-earned money!

A WATT IS A WATT IS A WATT

While technology has improved and heaters may have become more efficient over time, the laws that govern electricity are much like those of physics. Neither sees a lot of amendments! With this in mind, here is another fact and a great quote I will attribute to an energy advisor I once worked with: "A Watt is a Watt is a Watt." In other words, if a person plugs in a 1,500 watt space heater it is going to use 1,500 watts of energy. Putting a very nicely built mahogany cabinet around a \$30 space heater and charging people \$350 for it doesn't change the amount of power that unit is going to use. It's not a miracle. Let's be nice. For the sake of argument we'll call it a misrepresentation of a product's true potential to perform.

DO A COST ANALYSIS BEFORE MAKING A PURCHASE

If you are using these units, our Beneficial Electrification department can do a cost analysis for you. I think you will be shocked to see what these will actually cost you. Oftentimes people tell us things like, "the salesperson told me these heaters would cost me pennies a day." If this sounds familiar, think about this...did they quantify how many pennies per day?

EFFICIENT DOES NOT EQUAL COST-EFFECTIVE

Don't get me wrong, electric resistance heaters are efficient. For every unit of electricity that is consumed by these devices, they will produce one unit of heat. The problem is they are just not very cost-effective. Again, and I can't emphasize this enough, no matter how you slice it, a watt is a watt. It doesn't matter what kind of heater or appliance you have. If you put 1,000 watts in, you get 3,412 British Thermal Units of heat out.

MULTIPLE HEATERS MULTIPLY COSTS

We often visit homes after receiving calls from members, and we find three to five electric space heaters in their home. Because these members have been misled, they wonder how their electric bills could be so high. The simple fact is the cost of operating multiple electric heaters is almost always significantly more than most central heating systems.

AN ENERGY AUDIT COULD SAVE YOU MONEY

If this article hits close to home, I would encourage you to contact the Sioux Valley Energy Beneficial Electrification Department. They have the experience and knowledge to help guide you in your quest to save on your heating bills. In closing, I implore you to ask questions and do some research before you buy any "miracle heaters." I think you will find that facts will cut through a lot of marketing hype and could save you a significant amount of money and frustration in the end.

When the energy is electric



Sheila Gross Energy Services Specialist

You'll rave about all the benefits you get by switching to electric appliances, power tools and even vehicles. From safety to sustainability, here are four reasons to make the switch from gas to electric.

SAFETY FIRST

Electric appliances, especially stoves, are generally safer than their gas counterparts as they eliminate both open flames and the potential for a gas leak They do not produce carbon emissions, and they are not as noisy. They are also safer because they do not have idle mode like the gas-powered options do.

COST SAVINGS

Not only do electric appliances, power tools and vehicles run on a more affordable energy source, they generally require less maintenance than their gas-powered counterparts. This can result in significant savings that will outweigh your upfront investment over the long haul.

EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

When it comes to things like vehicles, heat pumps and water heaters, electric options take less energy to do the same amount of work, which makes them more efficient and more sustainable. They're easier on your pocketbook and better for the planet. Plus, you'll never have to worry about running out of gas when you're in the middle of a project!

IT'S UNIVERSAL

Energy conversions are costly. Your home and business are already set up for electricity, so getting a new device up and running is as simple as plug and play. Plus, electricity powers all types of energy usages, while gas is limited in its scope of power.

CONTACT SIOUX VALLEY ENERGY

Have questions about going electric? Contact Sioux Valley Energy at 800-234-1960 or email Sheila Gross at sheila.gross@siouxvalleyenergy.com.



An estimated 5.2 million Americans participate in cross country skiing while reaping the rewards of being active during the winter months.

Nordic Ski Club promotes the benefits of cross country skiing on mind, body and soul

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Many winter sports enthusiasts are firm in their belief that snow skis are meant to travel in one direction only - downhill.

But members of the Black Hills Nordic Ski Club use their skinny skis to take them wherever the trail may lead.

The club's winter playground is located at Big Hills XC Trails seven miles southwest of Spearfish where its members have frolicked in the snow since the 1970s. Early prospectors named the area after they encountered steep grades in their pursuit of gold and fortune, but these days people flock to Big Hill for fitness and fun.

With more than 1,200 Facebook followers, the group invites not only cross country skiers to enjoy the 13.6 miles of trails but also skate skiers, fat bikers, snow shoers and even snow man makers.

Immediate past president Josh Wangeman explains there are an

estimated 5.2 million Nordic skiing enthusiasts throughout the country who seek both physical and mental health restoration along the trails.

After spending his day teaching science to his eighth graders at Spearfish Middle School, Wangeman likes to unwind in the woods.

"I've found that it's a good way to escape the crowds and participate in the wonders of nature," he said. "It's a great sport if you're looking to find some solace, enjoy the outdoors and get a good workout at the same time."

Wangeman, who also enjoys swimming and cross country running, fell into the sport after joining the National Guard six years ago. He began training for the biathlon, a competition where skiers travel from check point to check point with a .22 caliber rifle and shoot at targets. He has represented the Guard at competitions in Minnesota, Wyoming, Vermont and Utah.

Like many outdoor activities, cross country skiing has seen a significant surge in interest in the past year. One of the top attractions of the sport is that the cost of entry is relatively small. For instance, a quality mountain bike can cost thousands of dollars and other pastimes require a substantial financial investment for equipment, gear, fees and more.

"You can find some used gear and get everything you need for around \$100, or \$300 for new equipment," he said. "Trail access is free and you'll be outdoors getting some great exercise. As far as learning the technique, it's a straightforward process that's almost as simple as walking."

Wangeman said skiing across the snowy terrain can be a cinch compared to the work that's required to keep the trails maintained. Members of the Nordic Ski Club join forces with the Grooming Alliance of



Cross country skiers receive both the mental and physical health benefits of a sport that's economical to pursue.

Spearfish and log hundreds of hours of labor and donate hundreds of dollars each season to keep the pathways wellgroomed for all to share. Some trails are designated for snow shoeing and fat biking only. Volunteers have also built a warming shelter in a meadow that's situated among the five loop trials where skiers can take a break from the wind and cold.

Aside from the Big Hills XC Trails, the Black Hills National Forest area has other sites suitable for cross country skiing. The Eagle Cliff Network is located 15 miles southwest of Lead and offers 20 miles of trails that cross open meadows and meander through Ponderosa pine forests. Half the trails are rated "difficult."

Bear Mountain is situated 10 miles

southwest of Hill City and features rocky ridges, abundant wildlife and scenic overlooks along its 16-mile trail

Additional pathways in the area can be found at Beaver Creek, Bear Butte State Park, Custer State Park and portions of the Centennial and Mickelson Trails.

Here are a few helpful tips for those who are thinking about taking to the wintry trails:

- 1. Start your day right with a hot beverage.
- 2. Pack well, and don't forget gloves, hat and extra socks. Layer, layer, layer.
- 3. Choose the right place to ski with good grooming and a reasonable and amount of flat terrain.
 - 4. Consider taking lessons to

Cross country skiing sites

These state parks offer trails for cross-country skiers to enjoy:

- Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve
- Beaver Creek Nature Area
- Big Sioux Recreation Area
- George S. Mickelson Trail
- Hartford Beach State Park
- LaFramboise Island Nature Area
- Lake Herman State Park
- Lake Poinsett Recreation Area
- Newton Hills State Park
- Oakwood Lakes State Park
- Pelican Lake Recreation Area
- Richmond Lake Recreation Area
- Sica Hollow State Park
- Walker's Point Recreation Area



Volunteers keep the trails groomed for cross country skiing at Big Hill and also constructed a warming shelter, a popular site on cold and windy winter days.

improve your form.

- 5. Be prepared to fall. Acquiring balance takes time.
- 6. Keep your energy up with a ready snack such as a granola bar or an apple.
- 7. Have fun. Explore a bit and lose yourself in the rhythm of the sport.
- 8. Don't forget to look around you, and keep an eye out for wildlife or scenic vistas.
- 9. Reward yourself! You worked hard and did something adventurous.

OPERATION ROUND UP®



Sioux Valley Energy's Operation Round Up® program hits a \$2 million milestone during **December meeting**

Carrie Vugteveen

Carrie.Vugteveen@siouxvalleyenergy.com

Sioux Valley Energy members now have '\$2 million' reasons why they are committed to community through the Cooperative's Operation Round Up® (ORU) program. In just over 20 years, more than \$2 million has been awarded to non-profit organizations, schools and various communities to support initiatives that involve community service, disaster relief, emergency assistance, education and youth.

Operation Round Up funds come from Cooperative members who round up their electric bill to the next highest dollar and employees who donate from their paycheck.

Approximately 85 percent of Sioux Valley Energy members and nearly 90 percent of employees contribute. On average, participating members donate \$0.57 cents per month.

The Operation Round Up board of trustees recently awarded \$3,000 to the Child's Remembrance Garden in Rock County, Minnesota, which helped the ORU program surpass the \$2 million milestone. The Child's Remembrance Garden mission is to provide a place for people who have lost a child to grieve, remember and heal.

Child's Remembrance Garden Board members Pat Saum and his wife Helen say they are part of this project to honor their son Jesse who passed away 28 years ago, but it goes beyond that, according to Pat on the organization's Facebook page.

We are also involved to honor the lives of so many other children in Luverne and surrounding communities who we have lost too soon. Ask any parent you know who has lost a child, and they will tell you 'I don't want everyone to forget that my child lived, and they still matter'," Saum said.

The garden will be located on the northwest corner of Tonto Park off James Street in Luverne, Minnesota. This is located northwest of St. Catherine's Cemetery. Lucas Stoffel from Oak Haven Landscape and Design out of Sherburn, Minnesota, will be working to build the garden in Spring 2022.

HISTORY OF ORU PROGRAM

Operation Round Up was developed originally by the Palmetto Electric Cooperative in

OPERATION ROUND UP®

Left: Representatives of Sioux Valley Energy's Operation Round Up® program visited the future site of the Child's Remembrance Garden (CRG) in Luverne, Minnesota, to present a \$3,000 contribution to the project. The grant marked \$2 million in donations provided by Sioux Valley Energy members and employees to local organizations. Pictured left to right are CRG members Monica Facile, Lisa Dinger and Pat Saum, ORU trustees Dan LaRock and Greg Benda, CRG member Mary Thompson and Sioux Valley Energy's Lori George.

have been awarded

to area groups since

Approximately

900

communities and

local organizations

have received

funding since 2000.

South Carolina. Hundreds of electric cooperatives around the country, like Sioux Valley Energy, now administer their own Operation **Operation Round** Up® grants totalling

Round Up program.

"Operation Round Up has impacted approximately 900 different organizations throughout the footprint of the Sioux Valley

Energy service territory in just over 20 years. This has made a real difference in people's lives; a substantial impact on the well-being of area communities," CEO and General

Manager, Tim McCarthy, said. McCarthy added, "We are grateful to our members who are willing to round up their electric bill to support the Operation Round Up program and are proud to have been able to help so many with the \$2 million the fund has awarded."

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 (scouting, 4-H, booster clubs, hockey), scholarship programs, humanity programs, fire departments, cities, special

needs for individuals, and senior dining programs.

The Operation Round Up Board of Trustees

is appointed by the Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors. Current ORU Board members include: Brenda

Volkers (Brookings County), Alvina

Harvey (At large representative living in Minnehaha

> County), Dan LaRock (Rock County), Greg Benda (Lake County), Joyce DeClerk (Moody County), Connie Hillard

(Pipestone County) and Jeff Thompson (Minnehaha County).

Operation Round Up Trustee Greg Benda says the program helped complete projects that otherwise may not have been funded.

"I enjoy serving on the Operation Round Up Board, where we can extend the SVE motto, 'Serving our Members. Always.' by helping community and non-profit organizations fulfill their dreams," said Benda.

For more information on Operation Round Up, log on to www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/ my-community/operation-roundup



CHILD'S REMEMBRANCE GARDEN

The artist's renderings of the planned Child's Remembrance Garden in Luverne, Minnesota, features various gathering spaces. Lucas Stoffel from Oak Haven Landscape and Design out of Sherburn, Minnesota, will be working to build the garden in Spring 2022. The garden will be located in the northwest corner of Tonto Park off of Luverne's James Street. Learn more about the garden at www.childsremembrancegarden.org or on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/ Childs-Remembrance-Garden-102866492105483







Jesse Johnson of Jan Busse Ford in Highmore keeps customers informed of the latest industry news. Photo by Billy Gibson.

Car dealers adapt to emerging EV industry by making new investments and keeping their customers informed

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Keeping up with the emergence of the electric vehicle market is like listening to the hushed intonations of the announcer at the end of a 1960sstyle soap opera.

Will a reliable charging network be constructed?

Will EVs become more affordable? Will drivers ever overcome their range anxiety?

Will the political winds change direction?

Tune in tomorrow, Same time, Same channel.

Scott Shepherd is no fan of soap operas, but he's happy to give you his take on the topic. Shepherd is a career educator who has taken the EV leap and last June invested in Ford's debut model: the Mustang Mach-E. Shepherd recently delivered a presentation

describing his experience and insights to a group of electric cooperative representatives.

Subtitled "The Good, the Kind of Bad, and the Ugly," the presentation was intended to be an unbiased, unvarnished and apolitical analysis of the investment he made last year. Though Shepherd admits to being somewhat of an EVangelist, audience members were eager to hear Shepherd's comments to help them convey useful, accurate information to their electric cooperative consumers back in their respective service areas.

On the positive side, Shepherd said the advanced technology and the instant torque of his Mach-E deliver an exciting driving experience, and he likes doing his part to reduce emissions. His dealer, Jesse Johnson at Jan Busse Ford (Pioneer Garage, Inc.) in Highmore, was knowledgeable and ready to answer all of his questions and concerns. He noted

that factoring in a federal tax credit of up to \$7,500, he was able to save nearly \$1,000 in his first 5,000 miles of travel in the Mach-E.

"There's no gas tank to fill at over \$3 per gallon and no oil to change," he said. "A trip to Sioux Falls cost me \$6 in electricity, compared to \$49 in gas for an ICE (internal combustion engine)."

250

Approximate number of EV charging stations throughout the Upper Midwest.

On the not-so-good side, Shepherd pointed to the high front-end purchase price, reduced range during the winter months, the lack of Level 2 chargers in homes and the fact that traditional vehicles sometimes block access to public charging stations. He said in the rush to build out a reliable system of charging stations throughout the region, standardized practices have yet to be developed.

"There can be a lot of inconsistent pricing with public charging stations," he said. "Some require a connection fee plus a per-minute fee as high as 50 cents per kilowatt hour. The networks and the number of phone apps that are out there can be confusing, and I've also run across some charging stations that were malfunctioning."

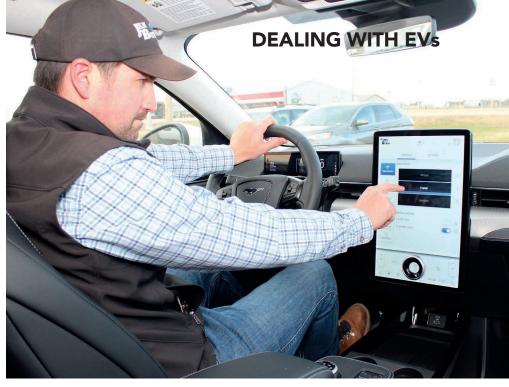
He pointed out that electric cooperatives, municipal utilities and investor-owned utilities in South Dakota and Minnesota are working together to create a charging network for public use that will reduce range anxiety for EV drivers. Presently, there are nine Tesla supercharger stations and four non-Tesla chargers in South Dakota, as well as more than 250 throughout the region and dozens more for the use of guests at hotels, campgrounds and other private properties.

Electrify America Fast recently announced the company is planning to install a bank of supercharging stations in Wall sometime in January, and state officials are looking to continue to invest money into light-duty charging stations from the second round of the Volkswagen Electric Vehicle Charging Station Program.

Johnson, Shepherd's sales agent, said these days he's getting lots of questions from scores of potential buyers who are ponying up the \$100 refundable



Scott Shepherd is shown above talking with students at the Lake Area Technical College Automotive Technology Program about his experience as an EV owner.



Jesse Johnson is shown adjusting the drive mode in the Ford Mustang Mach-E. Photo by Billy Gibson.

fee at www.ford.com to get placed on a waiting list for not only the Mach-E but also the new Ford F-150 Lightning, the company's first electric-powered pick up. In fact, he has a personal spot on the Lightning list along with more than 160,000 others across the country. Tesla, GMC, Rivian and Chevrolet are also introducing their own pick ups.

"We're getting calls from all kinds of people - retirees, commuting moms and dads, gear heads, collectors, technology buffs, environmentalists, farmers, you name it," said Johnson, who has already

> sent two early adopting customers home with the Mustang Mach-E and has a third on his

Johnson said car and truck dealers will have to redouble their efforts to provide service after the sale as the EV industry continues to emerge. He keeps his customers, including the many who are on the purchaser's waiting list, apprised of any new developments

160,000

Number of reservations made for the new Ford Lightning F-150 at www.ford.com.

in the market. For example, when manufacturers began recommending that owners refrain from exceeding an 80 percent charge - unless going on an extended trip - to extend the car's battery life, Johnson made sure his customers got the memo.

In preparing for the transportation future, car dealers are having to make significant investments in education for their sales force, training for technicians and new service and maintenance equipment to accommodate EVs.

"EVs are fun to drive with their immediate torque and safe-driving technology," Johnson said. "These vehicles are an excellent option for those wanting to forget about the price of gas, reduce maintenance and emissions. We understand they may not fit everyone's lifestyle, but we see a definite place for them in the future."



Co-op program encourages employee volunteers for area groups

Carrie Vugteveen

Carrie.Vugteveen@siouxvalleyenergy.com

'Commitment to Community' is one of Sioux Valley Energy's core principles and Co-op employees not only embrace that concept, they live it through volunteerism.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Historically, Sioux Valley Energy employees have been active volunteers for various community organizations. However, it wasn't until 2019 that a group of employees, taking part in an internal leadership program, recommended a change in employee volunteerism

efforts. Their recommendation included connecting employees with area communities to better meet the needs of residents. That's when the Community Connections program was born.

The mission of Community Connections is to "Be the light in our community through the spirit of volunteering, community service, and helping those in need."

During the program's first year, employees volunteered a total of 616 hours but those efforts were put on hold when the COVID-19

pandemic hit. Volunteering started up again this year in May and through November, employees have logged nearly 300 hours in 2021. Volunteer projects included working with the following organizations: Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Prairie Village, American Red Cross, Colman Veterans Park, Madison Baseball, Feeding South Dakota, Project Joy, Children's Inn, Children's Home Society Rake the Town (Hills, Hartford and Sinai), Lights at the Lodge (Pipestone), Brookings Gun Club, Brandon Fire Department, Big Sioux River Clean Up and The Gathering.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Left: In late November, a team from Sioux Valley Energy packed food boxes at the Feeding South Dakota facility in Sioux Falls. Opposite page: Co-op employees raked a lawn in Hills, Minnesota and (below left) volunteered with friends for Project Joy.

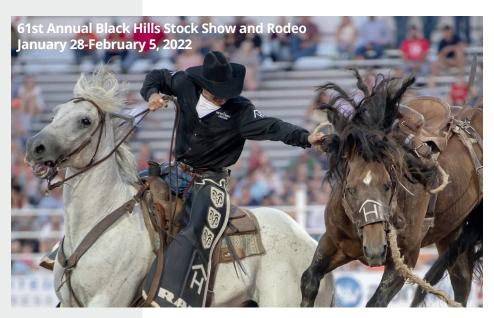


To be considered for the SVE Community Connections program, contact Chinelle at 800-234-1960. When employees volunteer through the Community Connections program, they are required to follow the Cooperative's current pandemic response plan.





Above: Sioux Valley Energy employees wrap gifts at the The Children's Inn gift wrapping station at the Empire Mall. Left: A separate team of employees filled backpacks for Feeding South Dakota in December.



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-connectionsevent-calendar to view more upcoming events. DECEMBER 21-25 Fort Sisseton Drive Thru Christmas Light Display 11907 434th Avenue, Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474

DECEMBER 23-24 1880 Train Holiday Express 222 Railroad Avenue, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

DECEMBER 26-31 Christmas Nights of Lights Storybook Island, Rapid City, SD, 1-605-342-6357

DECEMBER 26-31 Garden Glow

McCrory Gardens, Brookings, SD, 605-688-6707

DECEMBER 31New Year's Eve With The Davis Sisters

Performing Arts Center of Rapid City, Rapid City, SD, 605-348-4676

JANUARY 1 Winter Wonderland Nature Hike

Big Sioux Recreation Area, Brandon, SD, 605-594-3824

JANUARY 4-6 Dakota Farm Show USD DakotaDome, Vermillion, SD, more info available at dakotafarmshow.com

JANUARY 7 Neal McCoy

The Dakota Event Center, Aberdeen, SD, 605-725-2641

JANUARY 8 Eric Church

Denny Sanford Premier Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

JANUARY 14-15 Deadwood Red Dirt Festival

Mountain Grand Event Center, Deadwood, SD, 605-559-0386

JANUARY 15 Burning Beetle

10th Street, Custer, SD, find out more at www.facebook. com/barkbeetleblues

JANUARY 15-16 Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Association Gun Show

Swiftel Center, Brookings, SD, 605-793-2347

JANUARY 16 Sioux Falls Izaak Walton League January Trap Shoot

5000 N Oakview Place, Sioux Falls, SD, 11 a.m. start, lunch available, 605-332-9527

JANUARY 16 WWE Supershow

Denny Sanford Premier Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

JANUARY 21-23

That Golden Girls Show Orpheum Theater Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

JANUARY 22

Reba McEntire

Denny Sanford Premier Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

JANUARY 28-29 Deadwood Pro Snocross

Races

Days of '76 Rodeo Grounds, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

JANUARY 28-29

27th Annual Dinner Theater

Reliance Legion Hall, Reliance, SD, call 605-730-0553 for more info and tickets

JANUARY 28-31 Lead Winterfest

Various Locations, Lead, SD, call 605-584-1100

JANUARY 28-FEBRUARY 6 Black Hills Stock Show &

Central States Fairgrounds & Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-355-3861

JANUARY 29-30 Dakota Territory Gun

Collectors Association
Gun Show

National Field Archery Building, Yankton, SD, 605-731-9154

FEBRUARY 5

Lake Hendricks Improvement Association

Ice Fishing Derby
Hendricks, MN, contact Tim at
507-828-2113 for registration
and more information

FEBRUARY 20

Sioux Falls Izaak Walton League February Trap Shoot

5000 N Oakview Place, Sioux Falls, SD, 11 a.m. start, lunch available, 605-332-9527

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



SHOP LOCAL.

Because Co-op Connections® helps you save big and enjoy more.

The One Card that Does it All®.

As a *member* of Sioux Valley Energy you can use this card to receive discounts at local businesses! Stick it in your wallet and go shopping, dine out, or get a needed service.



SCAN ME

Scan this code to access the Sioux Valley Energy website where you can download the Cooperative Connections Card app for mobile devices. The **Co-op Connections Card** is a partnership between Sioux Valley Energy (your Touchstone Energy' Cooperative) and local businesses! Each member receives the Co-op Connections Card free. There's no sign-up. No annual fees. You get your Co-op Connections Card simply because you're a member of Sioux Valley Energy.

If you don't want to carry around the card, you can get the App. Just go to your iPhone or Android store and search for 'Co-op Connections'. You will need to register.

National discounts are also available for prescriptions, health services, hotels, concert and sporting events, insurance, and travel! In addition, you can shop on-line and get cash back from over 3,000 retailers.

Log on to www.connections.coop today to start saving!

Arlington

Bits of Yesterday Antique Mall: 10% OFF
Flowers by Betsy: FREE carnation with \$50 purchase
Lake Region Golf Club: Pay for 9 holes of golf and play 18

Brandon

3 Degrees Infrared Sauna Studio: A weekly pass for \$49 Anytime Fitness: FREE 7 day pass and FREE enrollment Brandon Ace Hardware:

January-June – \$10 OFF of a purchase of \$50 on regular priced items.

July-December – Purchase one can of 12 oz Great Stuff and get the second can of equal or less value for half price (regular price \$4.99)

Brandon Golf Course: 18 holes for the price of 9 holes (weekdays only)

Brandon Pharmacy: 10% OFF Leader brand products
Catori Wellness: 10% OFF any massage service
Fit for Life Chiropractic, LLC: FREE consultation for any
member. 20% OFF nutrition products

Harry Buck-Hegg Realty: FREE market analysis
Heartland Funeral Home: \$500 discount off any traditional funeral service or pre-paid traditional plan
Holiday Inn Express & Suites-Brandon: 5% OFF any

non-discounted room rate

Jones Family Eyecare: 10% OFF glasses

Love That Look: 15% OFF any product
Rivers Edge Decorative Concrete LLC: FREE sealer with any
stamped concrete patio installation

Splitrock C-Store: 10 cents OFF per gallon of gas purchase

Sunshine Foods: One FREE gallon of Sunshine milk (1% or skim) with \$100 purchase. Limit one use per customer per day. PLU #10200

Taco John's: FREE churro bites with the purchase of combo meal

Tailgator's: Buy 2 entrees get a FREE dessert
Today's Family Dentistry: 15% OFF dental work paid
in full day of service. Must show card at time of
service

Wilde Prairie Winery: 2 wine tastings for the price of 1, 10% DISCOUNT on wine purchase

Brookings

Anytime Fitness: 1 month FREE when sign-up for membership and receive 2 FREE personal training sessions

Apollo Water Systems: \$100 OFF equipment purchased in the Pipestone or Brookings coverage area

The Automotive Service Center: FREE Tire Rotation & Disc Brake Inspection with purchase of an oil change

b.beautiful hair lounge: \$10 OFF a highlight with a haircut

B-Free Satellite: One FREE installation of a Google Nest Smart Home device

Brookings Family Dentistry: 50% OFF custom whitening trays with an exam and cleaning

Campus Hair: 10% OFF product each visit or 10% OFF 1st salon visit (hair or nail services)

Cubby's Sports Bar & Grill: \$1 OFF any starter
Dakota Lux LED Lighting Solutions: 20% OFF all purchases
Hometown Service and Tire: \$5 OFF an oil change

Martin Oil: 3 cents OFF per gallon – up to 100 gallons – purchase at our pumps

Midwest Glass, Inc:

- #1) \$40 rebate off windshield replacement
- #2) Buy 5 professionally installed windows and get the sixth FREE
- #3) \$50 OFF custom glass shower

The Optical Shop: 25% OFF glasses

Party Depot: 10% OFF regular priced items. Rentals excluded.

Perry Electric Air Conditioning & Heating: Purchase a Heat Pump System & receive a Green Mountain Pellet Grill/Smoker & a bag of pellets FREE!

Powershop Gym: First month \$19 plus one time \$10 key fob charge (\$39.95 after that). New Members only

Qdoba Mexican Grill: 15% OFF any entrée

Schoon's Pump N Pak: 10 cents OFF per gallon of gas purchase

Sixth Street Optical: 20% OFF eye glasses (frames and lenses)

Tee'd Off Golf Simulators: \$5 OFF for 1 hour simulator rental

The UPS Store:

- #1) 15% OFF regular price printing services.
- #2) Additional 3 months FREE with 1 year contract on mail box rental

Young Door Service Inc: 15% OFF parts

Chester

The Shipwreck: 10% OFF food

Colman

Colman Building Center, Inc: 10% OFF regular priced products up to \$500

Crooks

Pump N Stuff: \$2 OFF one large Hot Stuff Pizza

Dell Rapids

Dell Rapids Ace Hardware: 10% OFF 1st Tuesday of the month

Dells Theatre: All day every Sunday-Thursday, buy any size popcorn and receive the same size pop for FREE

Pizza Ranch: #1) Any large pizza for \$11

#2) \$1 OFF buffet

Edgerton

Douglas J Vermeer 0.D.: 33% OFF a second frame and lens **M&H Hardware:** \$1 OFF 9 watt or larger LED light bulbs (up

to quantity of 10). Complete a SVE LED lighting rebate form (commercial accounts only) and receive an additional \$5 OFF per bulb (maximum rebate \$100)

Tinklenberg Lumber & Hardware: 10% OFF the purchase of any 2 gallons of Valspar paint

Egan

Blue Jays: FREE fountain pop with meal (dine in only)

Elktor

The Knotty Pine Supper Club: HALF PRICE appetizer with the purchase of an entrée

Garretson

Nordstrom's EWE Pullet: FRFF admission

Nordstrom's Full-Service Auto Recycling: \$10 OFF any purchase over \$100

Nordstrom's Installation & Diagnostic Center: \$50 OFF any repair over \$500

Shear Magic: \$5 OFF a haircut with color

Hardwick

VanDerBrink Auctions, LLC: \$500 FREE advertising towards farm or land auctions

Hartford

Checkered Grafx: 25% OFF one apparel rhinestone tee Eich Law Office, Prof. LCC: 10% OFF the preparation of estate planning documents

Hartford Building Center: \$10 OFF of a \$100 regular priced purchase

Tammen Auto & Tire Inc: \$5 OFF an oil change, \$40 OFF a set of tires installed

Humboldt

N-Rich Plant Food & Fertilizer, Inc: 5 cents OFF per pound of our signature fertilizers

Lake Norden

Klassy Kuts Salon: #1) 10% OFF any retail purchase #2) \$3 OFF any service #3) 1 FREE facial wax with a purchase of a haircut & style

Luverne

75 Diner: One FREE beverage with purchase Brandenburg Gallery: 20% OFF regular priced in-stock photographs & merchandise

Busse Plumbing, Heating, & AC Inc: 15% DISCOUNT on pre-season furnace or air conditioner inspection

Country Cupboards of Luverne, Inc.: FREE Estimate
Herb N Legend: 10% OFF any regular priced purchase

Herman Motors: 15% OFF labor
Luverne Power Fitness: \$5 OFF per month on a 12-month membership

Luverne Monuments: \$100 OFF memorials over \$1,000
Pizza Ranch: 10% OFF buffet

Rock County Eye Clinic: 25% OFF frames or 10% OFF annual supply of contacts

Salon 75: #1) 10% OFF retail product purchases

#2) \$3 OFF massage

#3) \$3 OFF pedicure or manicure

#4) \$3 OFF a facial

The Ideal Weigh, Inc: 50% OFF the consultation fee **Those Blasted Things:** 7% OFF

Madison

Community Center: 10% OFF membership annual membership dues

Dairy Queen: FREE drink with the purchase of a basket meal or salad

Encore Family Store: 10% OFF purchase over \$5
EXIT Realty Advantage-Adam Foland: FREE Market Analysis
for residential homes, lots, recreational prop, land

Jack's Meat Market: \$1 OFF our own made beef jerky — limit of 5 bags

Lake Herman Auto Sales. Inc.: Receive a \$25 fuel certificate

with vehicle purchase. Must present card at time of purchase.

Leader Printing: 15% OFF of your sheet-fed or digital print order.

Madison Family Dental, LLC: 10% discount day of service. Payment with check or cash only.

Madison Vision Clinic: 20% OFF prescription or non-prescription sunwear

Nicky's: FREE dish of ice cream with purchase of entrée *Pizza Ranch:*

#1) Any 2 large pizzas for \$9 each (carry-out only)#2) \$1 OFF buffet

Prairie Village: Buy one train ride ticket, get one FREE (with paid admission)
Signature Realty Group: \$200 gift card to Montgomery's

Furniture at closing-offer to buyer and seller Sparkle & Sass Boutique: 10% OFF regular priced purchase The Shepherd Shop: 10% OFF regular priced merchandise

We Care Dental: 10% OFF dental work paid in full the day of service. Payment with check or cash only, must show card at time of service.

Wireless World: \$10 OFF accessories with upgrade or new activations

Your Peace of Mind Home Inspections: 10% OFF standard house inspection

Pipestone

Bole-More Lanes Bar & Grill: Free shoe rental
Douglas J. Vermeer O.D.: 33% OFF second pair of glasses
Dynamic Health Chiropractic, Ltd.: 20% OFF all in-stock
nutrition and support products
Gevermans Clothina Co.: 20% OFF total purchase (regular

price only)

Kenner Ciff Charle EDEE Dipostopo Efficie Nocklaso with

Keepers Gift Shop: FREE Pipestone Effigy Necklace with any purchase

Luann's Gas and More: Any fuel 5 cents per gallon DISCOUNT (up to 20 gallons)

Rustad's Design Center: 10% OFF store-wide (does not pertain to installation and/or labor charges)

Ramona

Mown-Town Steakhouse Café: 10% OFF final bill

Renner

Monarch Steak House and Lounge: Buy one single serve beverage and get one single serve beverage for \$1. Good for one offer per day.

Sioux Falls

24/7 Fitness & Tanning Club: 24-hour access fitness membership rate of \$29.95/month & no joining fees 9Round: 10% OFF regular priced membership

Advanced Tech Inc:

#1) 20% off Service Labor

#2) 20% off our Commercial Grade Virus Protection

#3) 20% off of 1st year of Back Up Services

Audiology Specialty Clinic: 10% OFF custom fit earplugs
Avera Heart Hospital: \$5 OFF a Planet Heart Screening
Bagel Boy: FREE small fountain pop or small brewed
coffee with any purchase

Batteries Plus Bulbs: 10% OFF any purchase

Big D Technology Solutions, Inc: Two months FREE of online backup with a one year contract

Carnaval Brazilian Grill: 10% OFF regularly price tab (Monday-Thursday)

Chris's Auto Repair: 1 full synthetic oil change for \$37.77
ClubHouse Hotel & Suites: 15% OFF our best available rates
(STAR rate)

Combined Pool & Spa: 15% OFF hot tub and pool chemicals Crossroads Book & Music: 20% OFF any one regularly priced item

Dakota Rustproofing: \$10 OFF any rustproofing service/ includes coupons

Dakotaland Autoglass: 20% OFF glass replacement & rock chip repairs in shop for \$39.99

Gene's Studio, LTD: \$25 OFF Portrait Session Fee

Graham Tire Company: \$5 OFF an oil change, \$50 OFF any repair over \$500, and \$40 OFF a set of regular priced tires installed

Heartland Computers: 10% OFF (not valid on Apple or clearance items)

Homewood Suites by Hilton: 10% OFF

Honey Baked Ham Co. & Café: Buy 1 sandwich & get 1 sandwich FREE w/ purchase of 2 regular drinks Hydraulic World, Inc: 10% OFF regular priced hydraulic hose assemblies

Interstate All Battery Center: 10% OFF of batteries, accessories & cell phone/tablet repair

Jenny Craig: FREE 30-day membership

Juice Stop: 10% OFF any 24 oz smoothie at regular price (not valid with any other offer) 1 use per visit. Some restrictions apply

Justice Fire & Safety, Inc.: 10% OFF first visit, includes service/maintenance & new products

Keller Williams Realty – Dawna Kuck: \$250 cash back at closing with Dawna Kuck

Michaels Fence: 10% OFF stock superdeck stains and stock dog kennel panels

Nothing Bundt Cakes: 10% OFF

Overhead Door Company of Sioux Falls: FREE transmitter with purchase of residential or commercial door operator Pearle Vision: 30% OFF frames. 20% off lenses on

prescription evewear only

Physicians Vein Clinics: FREE vein screening

Piper Custom Framing & Fine Art Gallery: 20% OFF custom framing services

Pita Pit-Sioux Falls: 10% OFF order

Premier Auto Group: \$250 OFF purchase of first vehicle, additional vehicles \$50

Riddle's Jewelry: 40% OFF retail prices on one colored gemstone, Black Hills Gold, or diamond jewelry item.

*May not be combined with other offers.

Some exclusions apply.

Roto Rooter of Sioux Falls: \$10 OFF per invoice **SAFE-N-SECURE:** 10% OFF regular price

Sioux Falls Audiology Associates: \$500 OFF any pair of hearing aids and 10% OFF hearing protection

Sparkle Uniforms: 15% OFF uniforms, labs coats & scrubs Website info at www.sparkleuniform.com

Spencer Furniture & Floors: 20% OFF any furniture Stewart School: 15% OFF all regular price services T&A Service: 10% OFF any service/repair excluding oil changes & tire services

TownePlace Suites: 15% OFF hotel rate

Ultimate Automotive: 10% OFF labor, \$5 OFF an oil change Vacuum Center LLC: 10% DISCOUNT on all new and used vacuums in stock

Valvoline Instant Oil Change: 10% OFF all items and services Visions Eye Care: 50% OFF frame with purchase of lenses Walden Carpets: \$1 per yard discount on in-stock products Wild Bird Connection: 5% OFF bird seed mixes (cannot be used with other offers)

World Wide Automotive: 5% OFF any automotive repair service, up to \$100 OFF automotive purchase Young & Richard's Floral and Gift: FREE floral delivery in Sioux Falls or 10% OFF any in-store purchase

Геа

Neighborhood Dental: Complimentary whitening with cleaning

Service Master of Sioux Falls: \$10 OFF two or more rooms of carpet cleaning

Tyler

Apollo Water Systems: \$100 OFF equipment purchased in the Pipestone or Brookings coverage area

Valley Springs

Hello Gorgeous, Inc: 1/2 OFF electrolysis/sugaring hair removal service or 1/2 OFF face sculpting

Wentworth

Ladditude Pleasure Cruise LLC: 10% OFF



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Sioux Valley Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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