



Cooperative Connections

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Love Your
Electric Co-op**

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Racing in
Nemo**

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SVE Board Approves

2020 Workplan and Budget

**Tim McCarthy, GM/CEO**

tim.mccarthy@siouxvalleyenergy.com

In December the Board of Directors met to review, consider and vote on approval of the 2020 work plan and budget for the Cooperative. After careful consideration and close adherence to our mission—“Serving Our Members. Always”—the Board approved the plan which encompasses capital expenditures, the financial forecast including budgeted power supply costs and revenue requirements as well as implementation plans for existing and new initiatives.

The 2020 work plan continues aggressive line replacement of 125 miles per year which is necessary to ensure reliable service to our members. The system improvement plan and capital budget are very similar to 2019. Electric infrastructure additions and replacements are expected to cost just over \$18 million. Our engineering department is anticipating more than 412 new services this year at a cost of \$1.73 million. The budget includes the purchase of 919,296 MWH at a cost of nearly \$59 million.

The increased capital budget along with an extra \$2 million increase in power supply costs due to capital improvements and other additional expenses will mean that existing rate levels are not enough to meet financial requirements and budgeted expense levels. Estimated revenues are approximately \$4 million short which will require a rate increase in 2020. While we do plan to utilize deferred revenue, it will not be enough to put off the rate increase. The Board of Directors will evaluate the rate plan this coming month and will determine the necessary course of action. We will communicate that plan at our upcoming district meetings.

For every dollar you pay to Sioux Valley Energy, \$0.655 goes towards power supply costs; \$0.15 goes towards indirect expenses (interest, depreciation and taxes); \$0.11 pays for total payroll; \$0.06 of that dollar is direct expenses (cable locating, right of way clearing, billing and postage, member meetings and incentive programs); and \$0.0255 goes towards the operating margin.

As part of our mission, “Serving Our Members. Always,” We strive to be a light in our communities, assist in economic development and provide valuable training, education, member engagement and safety awareness for our members. As part of this commitment, members will see several new initiatives including a ‘Peak Time’ rebate which will begin in May. The program will be voluntary for urban residential and farm/rural residential members. The program rewards members with a rebate credit for reducing their electric use during peak time events. Another new addition to our beneficial electrification incentive portfolio will be a rebate for “smart” programmable thermostats. We hope this incentive will encourage our members to explore home automation which will eventually lead to more individualized energy use solutions.

Sioux Valley Energy plans to embark on a new program to help area communities with economic development and revitalization programs. REVIVE 2030 will be introduced to several communities over the next year so stay tuned for this exciting initiative.

Safety is always a priority for this organization and as such we plan to continue public safety campaigns and hold another “Safety Day” for families this summer.

As always, the work plan includes legislative and grassroots involvement, so we can remain an advocate for Cooperative members on the local, state, and national levels.

Our 2020 Work Plan and Budget initiatives have been designed to meet Sioux Valley Energy’s system replacement plans, growth, member initiatives and challenges facing the electric cooperative industry. Through it all we strive to provide you—the member—with system reliability, affordable rates and programs and services that will continue to meet your needs and expectations. Stay safe this winter! We look forward to a great year.

Sioux Valley Energy

Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 497-440)

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Sioux Valley Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Energy Makeover Contest Winners Selected

Ron and Angie Svatos of Crooks were the winners of the certified energy audit and \$1,000 of weatherization improvements for the third quarter energy makeover contest.

Each quarter a winner is selected from online and mailed entries. This quarter's contest can be found on page 6.

More information on the Energy Makeover Contest can be found at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com under the 'MyPrograms' tab.



Operation Round Up Is Santa's Helper

This past Christmas was a special one in Pipestone, Minnesota. Santa was able to make a visit during the Historic Downtown Pipestone event through the help of a \$750 Operation Round Up Grant. The grant helped Santa purchase a new suit and related items.

During the event in Pipestone, Santa began his visit by arriving on a fire truck. He then met with area children, handing out candy canes and taking pictures.

Since the year 2000, more than \$1.8 million has been awarded to worthwhile causes throughout the Cooperative's service territory. Participating Sioux Valley Energy members round up their electric bill to the next highest dollar and that money is collected for Operation Round Up. For more information on how to apply for an Operation Round Up grant, log on to: <https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-community/operation-roundup>.



Space Heater Safety

Heating equipment is the second leading cause of home fires in the United States. More than 65,000 home fires are attributed to heating equipment each year. These fires result in hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries and millions of dollars in property damage.

Portable electric space heaters can be a convenient source of supplemental heat for your home in cold weather. Unfortunately, they can pose significant fire and electric shock hazards if not used properly. Fire and electrical hazards can be caused by space heaters without adequate safety features, space heaters placed near combustibles, or space heaters that are improperly plugged in.



Safety should always be a top consideration when using space heaters. Here are some tips for keeping your home safe and warm when it's cold outside:

- Make sure your space heater has the label showing that it is listed by a recognized testing laboratory.
- Before using any space heater, read the manufacturer's instructions and warning labels carefully.
- Inspect heaters for cracked or broken plugs or loose connections before each use. If frayed, worn or damaged, do not use the heater.
- Never leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off when you're leaving a room or going to sleep, and don't let pets or children play too close to a space heater.
- Space heaters are only meant to provide supplemental heat and should never be used to warm bedding, cook food, dry clothing or thaw pipes.
- Install smoke alarms on every floor of your home and outside all sleeping areas and test them once a month.
- Proper placement of space heaters is critical. Heaters must be kept at least three feet away from anything that can burn, including papers, clothing and rugs.
- Locate space heaters out of high traffic areas and doorways where they may pose a tripping hazard.
- Plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet. Do not use an extension cord or power strip, which could overheat and result in a fire. Do not plug any other electrical devices into the same outlet as the heater.
- Place space heaters on level, flat surfaces. Never place heaters on cabinets, tables, furniture, or carpet, which can overheat and start a fire.
- Always unplug and safely store the heater when it is not in use.

Source: esfi.org

Getting Involved

The state legislatures of both Minnesota and South Dakota convened in early January. Need to contact your legislator while in Pierre or Saint Paul? Here's how:



Contacting Members of South Dakota's Legislature:

Go to <http://sdlegislature.gov/> From there, you can search your senator or representatives, see the committees which they are assigned and send them an email. Need to reach them by phone? You can call and leave a message with the Senate at 605-773-3821 or with the House of Representatives at 605-773-3851. You can also send a fax to 605-773-6806.

Contacting Minnesota Legislators:

For contact information on Minnesota house members, visit:

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members>

For contact information on Minnesota senators, visit:

<http://www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/members>

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Don't let anything get near your extension cords!"

Sierra Staufacker, 9 years old

Sierra is the daughter of Cory and Staci Staufacker, Balaton, Minn. They are members of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Tyler, Minn.

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.

Bountiful Brunch



Pineapple-Zucchini Bread

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 3 eggs | 3 cups flour |
| 2 cups sugar | 1 tsp. salt |
| 2 tsp. vanilla | 1 tsp. soda |
| 1 cup oil | 1 cup crushed pineapple,
drained |
| 2 cups peeled and grated
zucchini | |

Beat eggs, sugar, vanilla and oil. Mix in zucchini and dry ingredients; stir well. Fold in pineapple. Bake at 350°F for 1 hour. Makes 2 loaves.

Geraldine Dahlin, Beresford, SD

Apple Pie Breakfast Bake

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 2 cans refrigerated French
bread | 1 (14 oz.) can sweetened
condensed milk |
| 1 cup butter, melted | 1 tsp. apple pie spice |
| 1 (21 oz.) can apple pie filling | 1 tsp. vanilla |

Bake loaves as directed on can; cool 20 minutes. Cut 1-1/2 loaves into 1/2-inch cubes to equal 7-1/2 cups. Reserve remaining 1/2 loaf for another use. Increase oven temperature to 375°F. In a 9x13-inch glass baking dish, evenly layer melted butter, apple pie filling and bread cubes. In a medium bowl, stir together milk, apple pie spice and vanilla. Pour over bread, pushing bread down to absorb liquid. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until deep golden brown and bubbly. Cool 15 minutes. Serve warm with maple syrup. (Note: You may also use day-old French bread cut into 1/2-inch cubes.)

Jean Osterman, Wheaton, MN

Breakfast Casserole

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 (8 oz.) can crescent rolls | 1-1/2 cups shredded cheese |
| 1 (16 oz.) pkg. bulk sausage,
cooked and drained | 8 eggs, lightly beaten |
| Diced onion, green pepper
and mushrooms, optional | 1/2 cup milk |
| 16 to 32 oz. hash brown
potatoes, depending on
number of servings desired | 1 pkg. country-style gravy
mix, prepared according to
package directions |

Press crescent rolls in a lightly greased 9x13-inch pan. Spread with sausage crumbles and veggies. Layer hash browns on top. Sprinkle with cheese. Combine eggs with milk; pour over all. Spread on gravy. Bake at 325°F for 1 hour or until cooked through in the middle.

Kim Jost, Agar, SD

Grilled Fruit with Cinnamon Oatmeal Crumble

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 6 T. butter, softened, divided | 2 ripe peaches, halved and
pitted |
| 2 T. light brown sugar | 2 ripe plums, halved and
pitted |
| 1 tsp. cinnamon, ground | |
| 3/4 cup quick-cooking oats | |

Mix butter, brown sugar and cinnamon in a medium bowl. Reserve 2 T.; set aside. Add oats to remaining butter mixture, stirring until well blended. Brush fruit with reserved butter mixture. Place cut-side down on grill over medium heat. Tent with foil or close grill lid. Grill 2 minutes or until grill marks appear. Turn fruit cut-side up; spoon oat mixture evenly on top of each piece. Return foil tent or close lid. Grill 3 minutes longer or until fruit is tender and topping is crisp. Serve topped with whipped cream or ice cream, if desired. Cooking over a campfire? Place grill grate over top of campfire. Grill fruit as directed, rearranging hot coals as needed to maintain even direct heat. Makes 4 servings

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 290, Total Fat 18g, Fiber 3g, Cholesterol 45mg, Sodium 137mg, Carbohydrates 29g, Protein 3g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Omelet in a Bag

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 2 large eggs | Green pepper, diced |
| Ham or bacon pieces | Mushrooms, chopped |
| Onion, chopped | Grated cheese |
| Tomato, diced | |

Give each guest a quart-size Ziploc freezer bag and have them write their name on the bag with a permanent marker. Crack 2 eggs into each bag (not more than 2). Shake to combine them. Put out a variety of ingredients and let each guest choose what they want in their omelet. Shake the bag. Zip the bag after making sure to get all the air out. Bring a large kettle of water to a full rolling boil. Place the bags into the water. When the water begins to boil again, boil for exactly 14 minutes. You can usually cook 6 to 8 omelets at a time. For more, make another kettle of boiling water. Open bags and the omelet will roll out easily. Serve with fresh fruit and coffee cake.

Roxanna Streckfuss, Mansfield, SD

Please send your favorite seafood, appetizer and beverage recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

QUARTERLY CONTEST

BE PREPARED FOR MOTHER NATURE

Keep your appliances on, your home warm, the game on TV, your sump pump running, and the lights shining during your next power interruption. **Enter by March 31st, 2020 for a chance to win this quarter's Energy Makeover Contest prize, which is a choice of either the installation of an interlock kit to make hooking up your portable generator safer and more convenient (\$500 value) or use those prize dollars towards the purchase and installation of a Kohler standby generator from Sioux Valley Energy.**

When it comes to using a generator for backup power, there are two ways to go--portable or permanently installed standby generators. A portable generator can be used for camping, tailgating, and if wired properly, for home outages. One of the simplest and least expensive methods of readying your home for the connections of a portable generator is to install an interlock kit in the main electrical panel and a permanently installed generator inlet on the outside of your home. The interlock kit, when installed properly, will not allow the main breaker and the generator breaker to be on at the same time so there is no chance of the generator back-feeding into the utility system. By feeding your entire electrical panel with the generator you will not have to run any extension cords from the generator throughout the house. However, depending on the capacity of the portable generator, you may have to manage some larger loads in the home such as the water heater, central air, electric heating, stove, and clothes dryer to name a few.

A permanently installed standby generator keeps your power on during an outage. It's installed outside (like an AC unit) and comes on automatically—whether you are home or away—all within seconds of a power outage. There's a higher investment to install a standby generator, but it takes all the work and worry out of dealing with a power interruption.

Sioux Valley Energy is now offering services of installing interlock kits and Kohler standby generators to give you peace of mind for Mother Nature's temperament. Most interlock kits can be installed for less than \$500. The Kohler standby units come in a range of sizes from 8 KW to 20 KW. Loans are available up to \$10,000, 5% interest with a 7-year term for the purchase and installation of standby generator equipment by the cooperative. Contact Reggie Gassman, Manager of Customer Electrical Services, at 800-234-1960 for a quote and more information on generator options.

'Peace of Mind for Mother Nature's Temperament' Energy Makeover Contest

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Account Number: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Email: _____

FIRST QUARTER CONTEST

Portable Generator Safety Tips

- Operate the generator in a clean, dry, well ventilated area. Operate in an open area—never in an enclosed, confined structure such as a garage or basement. Breathing in the carbon monoxide exhaust fumes can cause serious injury or death and improper ventilation can lead to ignition of materials. Keep a fire extinguisher nearby.
- Don't overload the generator—know the rated capacity. Don't tamper with factory engine speed settings. Read the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation.
- Turn off all equipment powered by a generator before shutting it down. Never fuel a generator while it is operating.
- If your home has not been wired by a licensed electrician to have an interlock kit, don't try to connect a generator directly to your home's electrical system. In these applications, use heavy-duty, outdoor-rated three-pronged grounded extension cords and plug appliances directly into generators. Contact SVE if you would like us to install an interlock kit.

*Please complete the attached entry form and mail to Sioux Valley Energy, Energy Makeover Contest, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017. The entry is also available online at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com. One entry per member. Enter by March 31st, 2020.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL SIOUX VALLEY ENERGY AT 800-234-1960.

I would like more information on: Heat Pump Rebate Electric Heat Rebate Marathon/Westinghouse Water Heaters Energy Audit Weatherization Program Electric Vehicle Program Time of Use Rate SmartHub Account Tool Smart Thermostat Rebate Commercial/Ag LED Program Irrigation Rebate Renewable Energy Credit Energy Saving Tips Interlock Kit/Generators

Why Does the Power Blink?

At one time or another we've all returned home or woken up late for work to see a blinking "12:00" on our digital alarm clock. You then have to reset every digital clock in your household that doesn't have a battery backup, from the microwave oven to the answering machine. Usually, this state of "eternal midnight" was caused by a "blink" in the electrical system.

While blinks can be annoying, they show that an electrical system is working exactly as designed. And while Sioux Valley Energy has taken steps to reduce the number of blinks across its power system, there are measures you can take as well. Let's look at blinks. These momentary power interruptions can occur anywhere along a power system—from the time electrons are generated at a power plant to being shipped across transmission line to substations, or during distribution from a substation to your home.

Why blinks? Blinks are created when a breaker, or switch, opens along any portion of the power system. The breaker usually opens because of a large, quick rise of electrical current. This large rise, called a fault condition, can occur when a tree branch touches a line, lightning strikes, or a wire breaks. When this happens, a relay senses the fault and tells the breaker to open, preventing the flow of power to the problem site. After opening, the breaker quickly closes. The brief delay, which allows the fault to clear, usually lasts less than two seconds. If the fault clears, every home or business that receives electricity off that power line has just experienced a blink. This could include thousands of accounts if the breaker protects a transmission line or a substation.



Reducing the blink's effects. Your co-op employs methods to reduce blink frequency. Tree trimming is probably the easiest and most common way, and one area where you can help. Make sure your co-op knows of any trees or limbs located close to a power line.

Meanwhile, you can reduce the frustration of blinks by purchasing an alarm clock equipped with a battery backup. This type of digital clock offers "ride through" ability for momentary outages. It will also keep the correct time and sound an alarm in case of a long-duration outage, provided a charged battery is in place. As an added benefit, these devices only use the battery in the event of a power interruption.

Blinks affect all electrical equipment, not just digital clocks. If there is a blink while you are operating a computer, your computer may crash and you will have to reboot, hoping all the while that there will be few corrupted files. An uninterruptible power supply (UPS) on your computer can help prevent information loss. The UPS incorporates surge suppression technology with a battery backup and provides you some time to save whatever you were working on and exit your computer properly.

The future of blinks. Sioux Valley Energy operates an active system maintenance program and works hard to identify and fix sources of service interruptions. Even though blinks will never disappear from our electrical energy delivery system, by working together with we can minimize effects of the interruptions and the frequency with which they occur.

Community Connections Volunteer Program

Lends a Hand



Sioux Valley Energy employees spent time delivering 'Meals on Wheels', wrapping Christmas presents and shopping for kids in need this holiday season. The new volunteer program called Community Connections was designed to allow employees to *"Be the light in our community through the spirit of volunteering, community service, and helping those in need."*

If your community or organization is looking for volunteers, please contact **Chinelle** at 800-234-1960.



ENERGIZING COMMUNITIES

We're led by members like you. Which means we're not out to make money. Instead, we're building communities by listening to your needs. We're shaped by the people we serve.

REASONS TO LOVE YOUR ELECTRIC CO-OP

Delivering More than Just Electricity

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

From reliable energy to community involvement, there are a lot of reasons why co-op members love their electric cooperatives.

Co-Ops Are Local, Community-Focused Organizations

Co-ops have a rich history of serving their members and are facing the future with innovative ideas to help their members and grow their local communities.

Local people helping out. From billing clerks to line workers and every job in between, the people working at your local electric cooperative are the ones you'll see in your communities. They are serving on volunteer fire departments and as first responders, serving on school boards and county commissions, as ushers at church and as youth sports coaches.

Sioux Valley Energy employees get final instructions before embarking on their meal delivery routes.



Some cooperatives have launched employee community service days where local communities or organizations benefit from a day of service, whether it be a town clean up, restoring a rural cemetery, delivering meals to shut-ins or helping others in need.

Keeping Members Informed

Whether it's through this magazine, which reaches members each month or through social media channels like Facebook and Twitter or mobile apps like SmartHub, cooperatives continually strive to inform their member-owners about events and issues that matter. From a quick post or tweet about why the power may have blinked or celebrating the achievements of area youth, co-ops are communicating with their members and connecting them to their community. As storms approach, co-ops offer helpful tips for preparing for inclement weather and how to deal with the aftermath of storms.

Helping Members Save Money

Co-op demand response and load management programs have helped members save money for decades. And now, with interactive tools like SmartHub, an increasing number of co-op members are accessing information about their home's energy use right from their mobile device or computer. Several co-ops offer energy audits and other ways to reduce energy use.

Appliance rebates, loans for heating and cooling equipment and reduced rates for some energy use

are offered by some co-ops in the state. Check with yours to find out what programs could benefit you.

Diversifying Energy Resources

Cooperatives have a history of using an all-of-the-above approach to meeting members' energy needs. The first utility-scale wind project in South Dakota was built by co-ops and several co-ops have solar demonstration projects to help members learn about solar grid interconnection and other aspects of the resource.

Investing in Youth

When it comes to looking to the future, co-ops have the youth in their communities in mind. Each year, co-ops invest more than \$100,000 in scholarships for students pursuing further education at colleges or technical schools. Dozens of students have the opportunity to go to Washington, D.C., for the annual rural electric youth tour, courtesy of their local electric cooperative. Several co-ops in the state send students on the four-day Youth Excursion to North Dakota each summer to explore energy careers and cooperatives. And throughout the school year, Co-ops in the Classroom and other safety demonstrations visit schools across the region to help younger students learn about using electricity wisely and how so be safe around it.





SIoux VALLEY ENERGY
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Sioux Valley Energy 2020 District Meetings

****All Members Welcome****

Complimentary Meal: 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Meeting: 7:00 p.m.

Menu: French dip sandwich, cheesy hashbrowns, vegetable and cookie

**Meeting Gift:
\$25 Bill
Credit**



Thursday, March 5

District 8- Location: Grand Prairie Event Center, **Luverne**, MN

Monday, March 9

District 1- Location: McKnight Hall, **White**, SD

Thursday, March 12

District 3- Location: William J. Janklow Community Center, **Flandreau**, SD

Thursday, March 19

District 10- Location: Edgerton Public School, **Edgerton**, MN

****Monday, March 23**

District 6- Location: Brandon Valley High School, **Brandon**, SD

****Tuesday, March 24**

District 7- Location: West Central School, **Hartford**, SD

Thursday, March 26

District 2- Location: Sioux Valley School, **Volga**, SD

****Monday, March 30**

District 9- Location: Pipestone High School, **Pipestone**, MN

Tuesday, March 31

District 4- Location: Madison High School Commons, **Madison**, SD

****Thursday, April 2**

District 5- Location: Taopi Hall, **Colton**, SD

****Denotes Election Meetings**

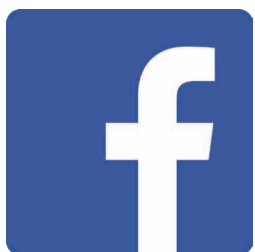
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- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov



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Valley Energy
on FaceBook!**

<https://www.facebook.com/svecoop>

ANNUAL CO-GENERATION NOTIFICATION TO THE MEMBERSHIP



In compliance with Sioux Valley Energy's adopted rules relating to Co-Generation and Small Power Production, Sioux Valley Energy is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers whom satisfy the conditions of a qualifying facility. Sioux Valley Energy is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements.

All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by the Cooperative. Interested members should contact Sioux Valley Energy, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017 or call 800-234-1960.

Nemo 500 Outhouse Races

NAJA Shrine
Transportation
Fund for Kids
Benefits from
Outdoor Event

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

**We called it the
Nemo 500 because
it sounded good.**

When one thinks of racing, cars, horses or motorcycles likely come to mind. But, in the Black Hills community of Nemo, outhouses – equipped with wheels, skis or both – are the vehicle of choice.

While each outhouse must be equipped with a seat with one hole, there are additional basic requirements in this competition designed to raise funds for the NAJA Shrine Kids Transportation Fund.

First, each outhouse will have a rider. And during the race, that rider will trade places with a teammate.

“There always has to be someone on the throne,” said Ervin “Red” Alspaw, a Shriner with the Oasis of Deadwood and one of the contacts for the race.

The outhouse must be at least five feet tall and the door (if there is one) has to stay open during the race.

The outhouse must have four walls and a roof and the team’s name must be on each of the walls.

“It’s a hoot,” said Alspaw.

Money raised at the event helps Shriners cover the transportation expenses of some 630 children in western South Dakota who seek care at Shriners Hospitals



A team prepares to race their outhouse in the 2017 competition.

nationwide.

“We called it the Nemo 500 because it sounded good,” said Troy Saye, race organizer and owner of the Nemo Guest Ranch where the event is held.

“We stepped it off a few years ago and it’s actually about 970 feet. You start at the restaurant and at midway everyone runs around the outhouse, retrieving a colored roll of toilet paper which must be placed in the correct order on a plunger.

Alliterations, euphemisms and creativity may make for memorable team names, but speed is the name of the game as the fastest team to complete the



Kids compete in the shovel races.

The Rules

OUTHOUSE RACE RULES and STRUCTURE

- 1) Outhouse can only be human powered. No electric-, solar- or gas-powered assistance. The outhouse must have four walls, roof, doorway and seat with at least one hole. It may have a door, but the door must remain securely open during the race.
- 2) The outhouse must be a minimum of nine square feet at the base and a maximum overall width not to exceed six feet (including grasping or pushing devices). A minimum height of five feet from the floor to the highest point of the roof.
- 3) Any number and size of wheels or skis may be used.
- 4) Any device for pushing or pulling the outhouse may be used except ropes. All pushing or pulling devices must be secured solid.
- 5) Outhouses may be built from any material but glass and must be structurally sound.
- 6) Each entry must have an outhouse name that is to be displayed on each side of the structure. Sponsors' names may be displayed anywhere on the outside.
- 7) There will be three age divisions. (Age divisions will be determined by average team ages. Add all team members' ages and divide by the number of team members.)
 - Division 1: Ages 12 to 25
 - Division 2: Ages 26 to 45
 - Division 3: Ages 46 and over

Good to know:

Teams consist of two to five people, one of which must ride inside the outhouse.

Safety gear including helmets are required for all members and ice cleats are recommended.

Outhouse passengers must be 12 years old or older. Handles or seatbelts are required for the outhouse passengers.

Teams' dress is to reflect the theme of their entry.

Teams make a mandatory pit stop at mid race for a fire-drill. Each member must run around the outhouse three times and the rider must switch places with one of the pushers. Each team member will be required to place a color-coded roll of toilet paper on a color-coded plunger in order of color scheme provided at race time. The race will be timed from start to finish, the objective is to get the lowest time to win.



The costumed Sesame Streak team poses with their People's Choice outhouse trophy after the 2016 race.

race is the winner.

Winners in each of the age divisions get an outhouse trophy hand-made by Troy and Willie Saye.

The Sayes created the event after a 2006 visit from Willie's cousin, shortly after they bought the Nemo Guest Ranch.

"He said he had to get home for an outhouse race. We didn't know what it was," said Troy. The couple researched the event and found that several other

states held races. They developed their rules for the Nemo event. Early races were held just for fun or to raise money for different organizations. The race has been a benefit for the NAJA Shrine Kids Transportation Fund for the last eight or nine years.

The creative names don't stop at the race team names. It takes a certain fortitude to dip a spoon into some of the entries in the chili cook-off contest where cooks serve up three gallons of chili with names like "Presidential Poopers Chili" and "Dave's Chunky Pork and Beef Chili."

Kids can compete in the Scoop Shovel Races, but competitors must provide their own scoop shovel.

If you're going, check-in for the three divisions is at 10 a.m. and race time is 1 p.m. Preregister your team by Feb. 1 to receive a T-shirt.

If you have a team but don't have

an outhouse to race in, contact the Nemo Guest Ranch to see if theirs is available.

Advice for first-time attendees? Arrive early, dress warm and be prepared for

a bit of a walk (late-comers have had to park a half-mile away from the event.)

Attendance at the event varies with the weather, Saye said. Crowds range from 1,000 people up to 2,400 people when the race time temperature was 53 degrees.

"You have got to see it to really enjoy it," said Saye.

"When we first started, we never imagined it would take off the way it did," said Saye.

Interested? Visit nemo500.com for more information or contact the Nemo Guest Ranch at 605-578-2708.

When we first started, we never imagined it would take off the way it did.



Kianna Knutson and Shane Binger left their 2018 wedding reception with a sparkler send off.

YOUTH TOUR SPARKS

Participants Make Lifetime Connections

Brenda Kleinjan

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The annual Rural Electric Youth Tour is billed as a trip-of-a-lifetime, which it is for the thousands of teenagers who have participated since it began in 1963. But for a certain few, the weeklong trip filled with congressional visits, sight-seeing and co-op educational opportunities was more life altering than they possibly dreamed.

Kianna and Shane, 2011

Kianna Knutson and Shane Binger participated in the 2011 trip. Kianna, from Philip, S.D., represented West Central Electric Cooperative in Murdo, S.D., while Shane, from Tulare, S.D., represented Northern Electric Cooperative in Bath, S.D.

During the week of travel, the two would talk some and share experiences. A visit to the Pentagon Memorial was particularly memorable for the two.

“For me, we hit it off right away on the tour,” said Kianna.

“But we went our separate ways. Whenever I’d head west, I’d try to stop in Philip and see her,” said Shane. “We kept in touch until we got to SDSU together.”

They started dating while attending South Dakota State University in Brookings, S.D. Shane graduated in December 2015 and Kianna in May 2016 and the two married in September 2018. They live in Redfield, S.D., and Kianna works in Aberdeen while Shane works in Tulare.

“The Youth Tour was one of my most favorite trips,” said Kianna. “It was a great way to meet people and make friends. It turned out one of them stuck for life.”

A sign at the Bingers’ wedding reception highlights the sparks that started with their 2011 Youth Tour.



For Shane, an additional outcome of the trip was that it sparked an interest in politics.

“It was an opportunity to see congress-people as actual people. That drove me to go back and intern with Sen. John Thune in 2015,” said Shane.

Riley and Kailee, 2009

Riley Schwader and Kailee Koester attended the 2009 Youth Tour together. Riley, of Winifred, S.D, represented Central Electric Cooperative in Mitchell, S.D., while Kailee of Redfield, represented Northern Electric.

They married in June 2014 on the heels of that year’s Youth Tour, which Riley’s sister participated (as did Kianna Knutson’s sister.)

The Schwaders live in Howard where they raise their two sons and where Kailee teaches fourth grade. The family was recently featured in a “ReEnergizing Rural” commercial talking about the Co-ops in the Classroom project.

Doug and Roberta, 1973

Roberta Johnson, a 4-Her from Parker, S.D., chosen to represent Turner County and Doug Stuebner, a 4-Her from Olivet, S.D., selected to represent Hutchinson County, met on the 1973 Youth Tour as the delegates for Turner-Hutchinson Electric Cooperative (now Southeastern Electric Cooperative), based in Marion, S.D.

“We started dating on Thursday, Oct. 18, 1973, when he asked me to go to the Hobo Week street dance at SDSU,” said Roberta, noting that Doug often wondered how she could remember the date. “I told him it was easy to remember because it was two days before her sister got married.”

Things clicked for the two and they made plans to marry.

“If I hadn’t been the South Dakota Pork Queen, we probably would have been married in December of 1975. But I needed to be single to compete at the national level, so Doug was willing to wait until the national competition was held in March of 1976. When someone else was crowned the national pork queen, Doug and I moved forward with our wedding

The Youth Tour was one of my most favorite trips.

plans and were married on Father’s Day, June 20, 1976. Even without the title of pork queen, I could still educate others about the nutritional value and versatility of pork when I became involved with the Porkettes.”

The two graduated from SDSU with majors in ag education and home economics education and were preparing to head to Marietta, Minn., when an opportunity to take over his grandparents’ farm came up.

“Entering farming had been a long-range goal, but when the farming opportunity arrived earlier than expected, we accepted. So, once again, Turner-Hutchinson Electric influenced our lives since they provided the electricity for our home and farming operation. We continued farming until June of 2006 when Doug had surgery for brain cancer. Initially, we were told the life expectancy for this type of treatable, but not curable, cancer was 18 months to two years. But by God’s grace and through hundreds of prayers, he has outlived that life expectancy by 11 years,” said Roberta.

The two moved into Menno in 2008 where Roberta continues teaching high school family and consumer sciences and middle school social studies.

Ethan and Vanessa, 2012

Ethan Ryberg of Buffalo Lake, Minn., was selected to represent McLeod Co-op Power in Glencoe, Minn., on the 2012 Youth Tour, the same year that Vanessa Peterson of Rosholt, S.D., was selected to represent Traverse Electric Cooperative in Wheaton, Minn. The two traveled with the Minnesota Youth Tour delegation that year.

While the two lived three hours apart, they began dating that fall and in 2013, they attended North Dakota State University in Fargo, N.D., together, majoring in pharmacy.

After their 2019 graduation, they have settled in the Bemidji area where they both work.

Electric cooperatives in South Dakota and Minnesota are once again taking applications for the annual Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. The 2020 participants might not find their future mate, but they will definitely have experiences of a lifetime.



The Schwaders live in Howard where Kailee teaches. They were recently featured in the electric cooperative “ReEnergizing Rural” campaign.

December 15-March 31

South Dakota snowmobile trails season, Lead, SD, 605-584-3896

January 25-26

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, National Field Archery Building, Yankton, SD, 701-361-9215

January 26, February 23, March 22

Meat Shoot, Gun Club, Practice rounds at 10 a.m., Shoot starts at 11 a.m., 2378 310th St., Rock Valley, IA, 712-540-9757, 605-530-1413 or 712-551-7164

January 31-February 2

12th Annual Winterfest of Wheels, Convention Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-231-3100

January 31-February 9

Annual Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo, Rapid City, SD, 605-355-3861

February 1

Lake Hendricks Fishing Derby, Hendricks, MN, 507-828-2113

February 1

Living History Fair, Brookings Renegades, LATI, Watertown, SD, 605-693-4589, dhuebner@itctel.com

February 1-2

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Dakota Event Center, Aberdeen, SD, 701-361-92155

February 2, March 1

Meat Shoot, Crooks Gun Club, Practice rounds at 10 a.m., Shoot starts at 11 a.m., 2808 W. 84th St. N., Sioux Falls, SD, 605-941-1984



March 14: 28 Below Fatbike Race, Ride and Tour, Lead, SD, 605-641-4963

Photo courtesy: travelouthdakota.com

February 8-9

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Convention Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 701-361-9215

February 9, March 8

Meat Shoot, Sportsmen's Club, Practice rounds at 10 a.m., Shoot starts at 11 a.m., 48605 255th St., Garretson, SD, 605-359-3844

February 10-16

Frost Fest, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6125

February 14

Snow Ball, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6700

February 15-16

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Ramkota Hotel, Pierre, SD, 701-361-9215

February 16, March 15

Meat Shoot, Izaak Walton League, Practice rounds and shoot starts at 11 a.m., 5000 North Oakview Place, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-359-9516

February 21

KORN and Breaking Benjamin, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

February 21-22

Mardi Gras Weekend, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

February 22

Cabin Fever Games, Yankton, SD, 605-665-8994

February 22-23

48th Annual Farm, Home & Sports Show, Ramkota Hotel, Pierre, SD 605-224-1240

February 26

The Harlem Globetrotters, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

February 27-March 1

35th Annual SD State Dart Tournament, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

March 14-15

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Davison County Fairgrounds, Mitchell, SD, 701-361-9215

March 18, June 11, August 13 and October 8

Kids Mystery Dinner Theater, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6700

March 20-21, 27-28

Annual Schmeckfest, Freeman, SD, 605-925-4237

March 21

Gift of Hope Charity Event, Come hear standup Christian comedian Jennifer Fulwiler while supporting a good cause, 7 p.m., O'Gorman Performing Arts Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-988-3765, www.ccfesd.org

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.