



# Cooperative Connections

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## A Different Kind of Family

# Grateful for Sioux Valley



**Tim McCarthy, GM/CEO**

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Last year I talked about family in my Christmas column... the people who, because of genetics, we are tied to. This year I want to talk about a different kind of family—my work family. When I came to Sioux Valley Energy seven years ago from Indiana, it was a leap of faith. I wasn't sure what type of culture, commitment and character the SVE workforce and Board of Directors would have. I had heard that it was phenomenal because SVE is highly regarded nation-wide, but I wasn't sure. What I learned over the last several years showed me that, hands down, our employees and directors exceeded nearly all of my expectations.

This is the time of year when they deserve recognition for their work and dedication. I am truly humbled to be part of their work family. We have a highly engaged workforce and Board who does not sit idly by, doing only the minimum. These employees and directors think ahead; they solve problems; and they are part of solutions.

The perfect example is the April 2019 ice storm. This storm was of historic proportions leaving a path of electric system destruction in its wake. Our employees and directors stepped up to the plate, big time. First, our Board of Directors helped develop the strategy and approved the financial commitment supporting the work of our employees including aggressive replacement of our aging infrastructure, exceptional customer service, an emphasis on member communications and a focus on employee/member safety. Secondly, our employees were laser focused on restoring power to thousands in difficult weather conditions as quickly as possible. Some may say it's their job, but if you could have seen, first-hand, the work they did, you would recognize their remarkable commitment to our members. They answered thousands of phone calls, worked thousands of hours and their internal drive for our members kept them going strong until every electric service was restored.

I could share hundreds of stories with you about the culture, commitment and character of the Sioux Valley Energy family. At some point, it becomes bragging so I will spare you. But during this Christmas season, I want to say thank you to our employees and directors for allowing me to be part of their work family. We have our issues, just like any other family, but we also stick together when the going gets rough. I am proud of each and every one of them and I am honored to call them family.

Merry Christmas to you and your family. Stay safe this holiday season and we hope to see you at district meetings!



# Sioux Valley Energy

## Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 497-440)

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Sioux Valley Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## SCHOLAR OF THE WEEK

### Nold awarded Scholar of the Week

Emily Nold, a student at Rutland High School, has been chosen as a Touchstone Energy Cooperative 'Scholar of the Week'. Emily was recognized with a \$250 cash award by Sioux Valley Energy and was featured on the KSFY news for her accomplishments. She is the daughter of Jerry and Rosie Nold of Brookings.

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, like Sioux Valley Energy, and KSFY Television have joined together to recognize the achievements of high school seniors throughout the region.

Recipients are highly motivated high school seniors who excel in the classroom and community. This program was founded on the four pillars of Touchstone Energy: Integrity, Accountability, Innovation and a Commitment to Community.

Brian Brosnahan, principal at Rutland High School, nominated Emily for her extraordinary high school career. Beyond her 3.92 GPA she has been involved in a number of activities, some of which include: Cross Country, Basketball (Team Captain), Rutland Student Council VP (18-19), Rutland Student Council President (19-20), National Honor Society Member, Sioux Valley EmPOWER advisory board member, Rutland FFA VP (17-18) and President (18-present), North View Lads and Lassies 4H Club Reporter (19-20). Emily also qualified for trips in 4-H National Shooting Sports, the 4-H Citizen Washington Focus, State FFA Prepared Public Speaking, National FFA Land Judging Competition and National History Day National Competition (Washington D.C.).



## SVE offering \$16,000 in Scholarships

Sioux Valley Energy is offering \$16,000 worth of scholarships to eligible graduating high school seniors or first-time attendees at an institution of higher education. The application deadline is 4:30 p.m. on Friday, January 17, 2020.

Applications will be judged on the basis of grades, ACT or SAT test scores, work experience, school activities, volunteer community service and an essay question.

The majority of the scholarship funding comes from Operation Roundup® funds, with additional monies from Basin Electric Power Cooperative and L&O Power Cooperative.

To be eligible you must:

- Be a graduating high school senior or first-time attendee at an institution of higher education.
- Plan to be a full-time student in an accredited college or vocational-technical school this fall.
- Be a child of a Sioux Valley Energy member.
- Have a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA.
- Provide a written recommendation from a teacher, administrator or counselor.
- One winner per family/per year.

Applications are available from your school counselor, from any Sioux Valley Energy service center (in Colman, Pipestone and Brandon), or on the web at: <https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-community/scholarship-program>.

## Winter Electrical Safety Tips

In South Dakota and western Minnesota, December through March is a particularly hazardous time of year for storms and electrical power outages. Heavy snow, ice and wind can ravage power lines, both on the main power grid and at home. Add to that the increased use of home heating equipment such as space heaters and electric blankets and the potential for dangerous electrical hazards and home fires only intensifies.

Keep your home and loved ones safe this season by following these important winter electrical safety tips:

- **Use space heaters safely.** Keep them a minimum of three feet from furniture, bedsprads, drapes or clothes and never leave them unattended when they're on. Don't use extension cords with your space heaters and always unplug the heaters when they're not in use. Keep space heaters away from wet or damp areas and never touch a heater when your body is wet.
- **Use caution with electric blankets.** Never use an electric blanket while you're sleeping. Make sure the plug and cord are in good shape; otherwise it can pose a fire hazard. Be sure to dispose of electric blankets that have worn or damaged areas.
- **Be careful with your kitchen appliances.** While crockpots and other slow-cooking devices get a lot of use in the winter, you should never leave them turned on when no one is home. Leaving them unattended is a major fire risk. And be sure to check electrical kitchen appliances for frayed or damaged cords and plugs before use.
- **Make sure your home is equipped with functioning carbon monoxide detectors.** Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless gas that kills at high concentrations and causes serious and irreversible injuries at lower levels. Deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning increase during the winter months due to the use of common fuels like natural gas, wood and coal. Installing an inexpensive carbon monoxide detector can save your family's life.
- **Are your smoke alarms in working order?** It's important to make sure that you have an adequate number of smoke alarms throughout your home and that they are functioning properly. Simply push the test button to make sure it beeps and replace the batteries if needed.
- **Don't overload circuits or wattage.** Despite the shorter, darker days of winter, don't go above the recommended wattage for your light fixtures. Don't overload wall outlets either and only plug three-prong cords into three-prong outlets. Use extension cords sparingly and only for temporary purposes.
- **Have your home's electrical panel inspected by a licensed electrician.** Because electric usage goes up significantly in winter, you may need an upgrade in order to meet this increased demand.
- **Keep outdoor outlets closed.** Check your outdoor outlets regularly to ensure that they don't have an accumulation of ice and snow on them. Keep them cleared off and closed to avoid moisture from invading the receptacle box and causing an outage.

Source: [www.mrelectricians.us/best-winter-electrical-safety-tips](http://www.mrelectricians.us/best-winter-electrical-safety-tips)

✓ STOP AT THE BANK

✓ GRAB THE GROCERIES

✓ FIND MY POLLING PLACE

✓ REMEMBER TO VOTE

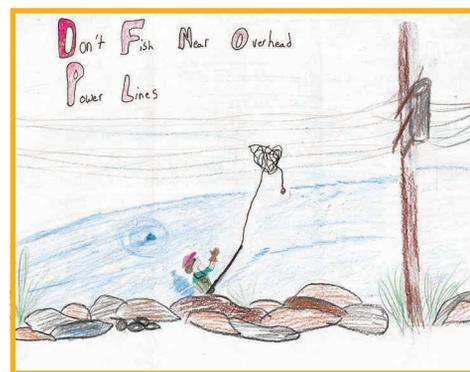


**CO-OPS VOTE**

A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES  
WWW.VOTE.COOP

**ELECTION DAY  
NOVEMBER 3, 2020**

### KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



**"Don't fish near overhead power lines"**

Lily Gums, 14 years old

Lily is the daughter of Dave and Kathy Gums, Clear Lake, S.D. They are members of H-D Electric Cooperative, Clear Lake.

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.

# Super Soups

## Leftover Turkey Chowder

4 slices bacon, chopped	1/4 cup flour
1/2 cup chopped onion	2 cups half-and-half
2 cups water	2 cups cubed cooked turkey
4 medium red potatoes, cut in 1/2-inch cubes (about 2 cups)	1 (8 3/4 oz.) can whole kernel corn, undrained
1 pkg. McCormick® Turkey Gravy Mix	1 tsp. McCormick® Sage, Rubbed

Cook bacon in large saucepan on medium heat until crisp. Add onion; cook and stir 3 minutes. Add water and potatoes. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 5 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Stir gravy mix and flour in medium bowl. Stir in half-and-half with wire whisk until smooth. Stir mixture into saucepan. Add turkey, corn and sage. Bring to boil on medium heat. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Makes 8 (1 cup) servings.

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 258, Fiber 1g, Protein 16g, Cholesterol 68mg, Total Fat 14g, Sodium 427mg, Carbohydrates 17g*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Crockpot Potato Soup

1 (30 oz.) bag hash browns	1/2 cup chopped onion
3 (14 oz.) cans chicken broth	1/4 tsp. pepper
1 can cream of chicken soup	1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese

Combine first 5 ingredients in crockpot. Cook on LOW 6 to 8 hours. Add cream cheese 1 hour before serving.

**Bonnie Weber, Aberdeen, SD**

## Taco Soup

1 lb. ground beef, browned and drained	1 (10.75 oz.) can tomato soup
1 can chili beans, undrained	1 soup can water
1 pkg. taco seasoning	Tomato juice

Combine all ingredients; heat through. Serve with shredded cheese, corn chips or crackers if desired.

**Velma Schmitz, Bonesteel, SD**

## Curried Pumpkin Soup

8 oz. sliced fresh or canned mushrooms	1 (15 oz.) can pumpkin
1/2 cup chopped onion	1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk
2 T. butter	2 T. honey
2 T. flour	1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
1 tsp. curry powder	Salt and pepper
3 cups vegetable broth	

In a large saucepan, saute mushrooms and onions in butter until tender. Stir in flour and curry powder until blended. Gradually add broth. Bring to a boil; cook and stir 2 minutes or until thickened. Add pumpkin, milk, honey, nutmeg, salt and pepper. Heat through.

**White Tail Ridge Bed & Breakfast, Hermosa, SD**

## Cheddar-Ham Chowder

2 cups water	1/4 cup butter
2 cups cubed potatoes	1/4 cup flour
1/2 cup sliced carrots	2 cups milk
1/2 cup sliced celery	2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
1/4 cup chopped onion	1 (16 oz.) can corn, drained
1 tsp. salt	1-1/2 cups cubed, cooked ham
1/4 tsp. pepper	

In a large saucepan, bring first 7 ingredients to a boil; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 8 to 10 minutes or until vegetables are just tender; remove from heat but do not drain. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, melt butter and blend in flour. Add milk all at once, cooking and stirring until thickened and bubbly. Add cheese, stirring until melted. Stir into undrained vegetable mixture. Return large saucepan to heat; add corn and ham. Heat through, stirring occasionally.

**Diane Fode, Rapid City, SD**

Please send your favorite brunch, seafood or appetizer/ 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.

# SVE Returns \$1.86 M to Members

**Members of Sioux Valley Energy** collectively own the Cooperative and enjoy several benefits unique to cooperatives. Because SVE is a not-for-profit cooperative, owned by its members, it doesn't technically earn profits. If revenues exceed expenses, the co-op earns "margins." Each year, margins are allocated to members, as capital credits, in proportion to the amount they are billed for electricity during that year.

These "capital credits" reflect ownership in SVE but are not automatically returned to you. The Cooperative uses capital credits to fund operating activities and reduce borrowing, with the intent of paying this capital to you in later years. After reviewing the Cooperative's finances each year, the Board of Directors determines whether a portion of capital credits can be retired, or paid, to members. The Board also evaluates the method, basis, priority, and timing of all capital credit retirements. Because capital credits are based on the dollar amount of electricity a member purchases, the retirement amount will vary from member to member and from year to year.

Most recently, the Board approved a capital credit retirement of \$1.86-Million. The Cooperative will be retiring a portion of the 1994, 1995 and 2018 allocations. Individuals and organizations that were members of SVE in those years will receive a portion of their capital credits. The amount of each allocation and retirement is based on how much individual members paid the co-op for electric service during that period.

## Capital Credit FAQs

**How are capital credits calculated?** The amount of capital credits you earn in a given year is based on the amount of capital you contribute to the Cooperative through payment of your monthly electric bills and the amount of margins realized by the Cooperative.

**Do I have to be a member for an entire year to earn capital credits?** Capital credits are calculated based on the amount you are billed for electricity. If you are billed for service for even one month, you will accumulate some capital credits if SVE earned margins during the year.

**What do I have to do to start accumulating capital credits?** Purchasing electricity from SVE automatically activates your capital credit account. SVE allocates and retires capital credits for you and provides you with notice of these processes.

**What's the difference between allocated and retired capital credits?**

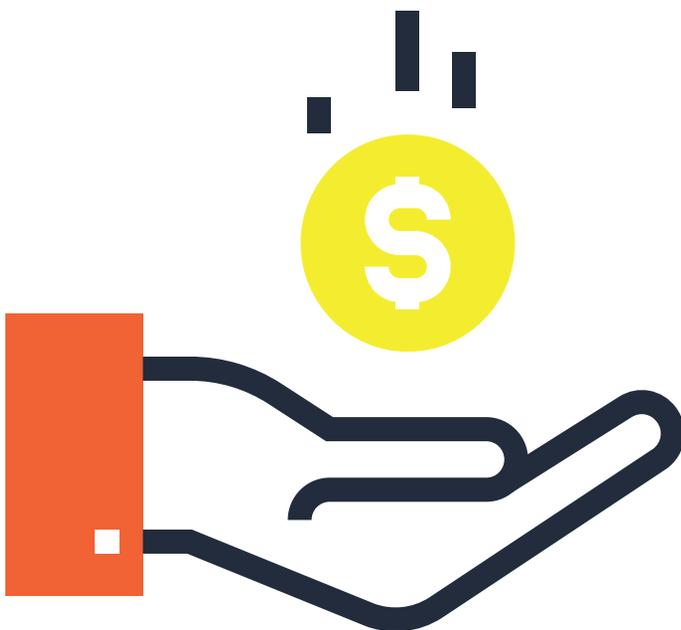
Allocated capital credits appear as an entry on the permanent financial records of the Cooperative and reflect your ownership in SVE. When capital credits are retired, a check or bill credit is issued to you, and your ownership in the Cooperative is reduced. After reviewing the Cooperative's finances, the Board of Directors determines the method, basis, priority, and timing of all capital credit retirements.

**Can I receive my cumulative capital credits allocation now?**

Cumulative capital credits allocations are simply a record of your ownership in the Cooperative. Because the capital is not held in an account and is reinvested to support operating activities, the entire balance cannot be retired to you at once.

**Can I use the capital credits that have been allocated to me to pay my electric bill?**

Because capital credits have no cash value until the Board of Directors calls for the retirement of a previous year's allocated capital credits, they can't be used to pay your current bill. Your electric bill is due now, but you may not be entitled to receive your capital credits for many years.





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

December Electric Bill  
DATE

**TO THE ORDER OF:** *You! The Member of Sioux Valley Energy!* \$ **BILL CREDIT**

As an owner of Sioux Valley Energy, you will receive a *Capital Credit* refund on this month's electric bill. \_\_\_\_\_ DOLLARS

MEMO Capital credit refund for electricity purchased in the years 1994, 1995 and 2018.

*Sioux Valley Energy*

**THIS IS NOT A CHECK. THIS IS CAPITAL CREDIT REFUND NOTICE. DO NOT CASH. CREDIT IS SHOWN ON DECEMBER BILL.**

**What happens to my capital credits when I leave the Co-op?**

Your capital credits remain on the books in your name and account number until they are retired. Because payments are made years after capital credits have been allocated, you should be sure that we always have your current mailing address. We may retire capital credits, outside the normal schedule for retirements, when the Co-op receives proper notification that a member or former member is deceased. Contact a customer service representative at 1-800-234-1960 to update your address.

**I am no longer with the Co-op and accumulated capital credits. My retirement is less than \$25. What happens to my capital credits?** In order to limit the administrative costs related to retiring capital credits, SVE does not automatically send checks to former members with a capital credit retirement of less than \$25. Those credits will remain on SVE's books as unissued capital credits. Former members with additional allocations will receive a capital credit check once the allocation increases the retirement total to \$25 or greater.

**What will happen to my capital credits if I pass away before they are eligible for retirement?** When SVE receives proper documentation to settle the estate of a current or former member who has passed away, the Co-op will distribute capital credits in accordance with our Capital Credits Policy. SVE discounts the value of these credits using the present value of each year's retirement compared to the expected payout of just under 26 years from when the capital credits were allocated.

**My capital credits retirement is larger than my December bill. Do I still get those credits?** Yes, if your capital credit retirement bill credit is larger than the total of your December bill, any remaining credits will roll over onto your January bill.

**Can I receive my retirement as a check instead of a bill credit?** No, all current members are receiving their retirement as bill credits. SVE is committed to pursuing the most cost-effective business practices. The Cooperative saves a considerable amount of money by retiring capital credits as bill credits as opposed to the expense of printing and mailing checks to more than 26,000 current members.

**SVE Needs Contact Information for Members**

**Update Phone Numbers**

If your phone number or any other pertinent information has changed, please contact Sioux Valley Energy to request a change to your account information. We would like to update your home, work and cell phone numbers. Accurate contact information is important so we can notify you of planned outages or anything else that may pertain to your electric service. You can call us at 800-234-1960 or log on to SmartHub to update your information.



Electric cooperatives are offering more than \$100,000 in scholarships for area students.

# COLLEGE AHEAD?

## Electric Cooperatives Offer Scholarships to Fuel College, Technical School Aspirations

**Brenda Kleinjan**

[editor@sdrea.coop](mailto:editor@sdrea.coop)

For more than 30 years, South Dakota's electric cooperatives have been helping fund the continuing education dreams of students planning to attend four-year colleges or technical schools.

Over the decades, the scholarships have funded students on their way to careers in education, medicine, government, energy and everything in between.

Through the Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship Program, each cooperative that is a Basin Electric member cooperative awards a \$1,000 scholarship to the dependent of a co-op member. Additional scholarships through the program are available to the dependents of co-op employees

Several cooperatives offer scholarships to individuals to become electric line workers or electricians. These scholarships, in addition to those awarded by the South Dakota Rural Electric Line Superintendents Association, amount to more than \$10,000.



## Future Engineer?

### Nationwide Scholarship Available

Since its inception three years ago, the Glenn English National Cooperative Leadership Foundation Scholarship Committee has awarded almost \$10,000 in scholarships to individuals pursuing a career in engineering.

This annual opportunity would not be possible without the foresight and generous contributions of the IEEE: Rural Electric Power Committee (REPC). Together, we hope to support future engineers with an interest and passion for defining and solving the electric utility challenges of the future, specifically in the rural parts of America.

### Dates & Deadlines:

- Applications will be accepted starting on Dec. 14, 2019.
- The deadline for application submission is 11:59 p.m. EST on May 15, 2020.
- Winners are selected by a scholarship committee and announced after the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association summer board meeting in Mid-July, 2020.
- Awards are distributed in August/September, 2020.

### Eligibility Requirements

- Must be a US Citizen
- Applicant must be enrolled in an ABET, four-year program of electrical engineering or electrical engineering technology, and have at least a 'B' average in major subjects.
- Applicant must be enrolled as a full-time student.
- Applicant must have already received academic credits equal to at least one year of college.

### Essay Requirement Information

- To be considered for the Engineers of the Future Scholarship, you must submit an essay using the following requirements as your guide:
  - Essays need to be between 1,000 and 1,500 words.
  - Essays must describe, in detail, plans to pursue a career as an electrical engineer, with an emphasis in electric power, in an electrical utility serving a rural area.
  - Essays must demonstrate knowledge of the unique challenges facing the electric industry in Rural America and describe how you might address these issues as an engineer.

But, the majority of scholarship money available from the region's electric cooperatives are not tied to a specific program of study.

A study released this summer by WalletHub.com found that South Dakota has the highest rate of student loan debt of any state in the country while Minnesota finished sixth on the list.

The study, performed by consumer finance website WalletHub.com, had researchers analyze 12 different measures of indebtedness, including average student debt, number of students with debt, and unemployment rate.

South Dakota had the highest proportion of students with debt, and was fourth highest when it

came to percentage of student loan borrowers over age 50.

Some of the scholarships offered by electric cooperatives require that students be in high school, while other scholarships are designed for students that may be returning to school.

Additionally,

students selected to represent their local electric cooperative on the Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., are eligible for a \$10,000 Glenn English Foundation Scholarship. Students can apply for the undergraduate scholarship once they have completed one semester of college or technical school.

Deadlines for local scholarships vary, so check with your local electric cooperative for details.

**South Dakota led the nation in student loan debt, according to a national study.**

Of the scholarships being offered by electric cooperatives, more than \$10,000 is dedicated to students seeking energy-related careers.



# District Meetings Set

## Four Elections to Take Place in 2020

Sioux Valley Energy District Meeting dates have been approved by the Board of Directors. Four elections will take place in districts 5, 6, 7 and 9. \*In district 6, only one at large seat (Rogen) is up for election this year. All incumbent directors have indicated they plan to run for the Board again in 2020.

Members who are interested in running for a Board seat must submit a nominating petition at least 60 days prior to the meeting in their respective district. The deadline for submitting petitions for the vacancies can be found below. The Cooperative Bylaws state the qualifications needed to be a director and can be found below this article. Interested members are encouraged to contact Amy Voelker, Executive Assistant, at 1-800-234-1960. All Board seats elected in 2020 will serve three-year terms.

Each district meeting will include a complimentary meal, a short informational program and members will receive a \$25 bill credit as a registration gift.

## SVE Bylaws: Director Qualifications

SECTION 5. Qualifications. **Any member shall be eligible to be nominated or elected or to remain a Director, provided that:** (a) They are a natural person receiving electric service from the Cooperative at their primary residence or meet the qualifications for corporate representation; (b) They have the capacity to enter legally binding contracts; (c) They have been and shall remain a resident of the district for which they are or were nominated or elected for at least one (1) year prior to nomination, and continue to reside therein during their entire term as Director; (d) While a Director and during the five (5) years immediately prior to becoming a Director, they have not been convicted of a felony; (e) They or their spouse are not employed by, materially affiliated with or have a material financial interest in any individual or entity which either is: (i) Directly and substantially competing with the Cooperative, or any of its subsidiaries; or (ii) Selling goods and services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative or its subsidiaries; or having sold goods or services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative or its subsidiaries within three (3) years of seeking nomination. (iii) Possessing a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative or any of its subsidiaries; or (iv) They are not in any way employed by the Cooperative or any of its subsidiaries nor have they been employed by the Cooperative or its subsidiaries within three (3) years of the directors nomination, and (v) They are not a close relative of any existing Director or existing employee of the Cooperative or its subsidiaries. For the purpose of this section only "close relative" shall mean a person who is either a child, grandchild, stepchild, parent, grandparent, stepparent, brother or sister, by blood or in-law, of the principal. (f) A designated representative of any non-human member such as a corporation, shall, notwithstanding that he or she does not receive service from the Cooperative at their primary residential abode, be eligible to become a Director, if: 1) He or she is an officer of said non-human member; and 2) He or she is in substantial permanent occupancy, direction or use of the premises served by the Cooperative; and 3) He or she is a permanent year round resident within the district for which the Corporation or non-human member is receiving service, and 4) Otherwise meets the qualifications set forth herein, provided, however, that no more than one (1) such person as the designated representative may serve on the Board at the same time and in the event that he or she should resign or is unwilling to so act, the directorship shall become vacant.

# 2020 District Meeting Schedule

Meeting Date	Director/District	Town	Location	Petition Deadline
Thursday, March 5	Leuthold (8)	Luverne MN	Grand Prairie Event Center	
Monday, March 9	DeGreef (1)	White SD	McKnight Hall	
Thursday, March 12	Martison (3)	Flandreau, SD	William J Janklow Community Center	
Thursday, March 19	Roskamp (10)	Edgerton MN	Edgerton Public School	
Monday, March 23	Fish (6) Rogen (6)*	Brandon SD	Brandon Valley High School	January 23, 2020 (3 yr. term)
Tuesday, March 24	DeMent (7)	Hartford SD	West Central School	January 24, 2020 (3 yr. term)
Thursday, March 26	Kooima (2)	Volga SD	Sioux Valley School	
Monday, March 30	Johnson (9)	Pipestone MN	Pipestone Area High School	January 30, 2020 (3 yr. term)
Tuesday, March 31	Daniel (4)	Madison SD	Dakota Prairie Playhouse	
Thursday, April 2	Weinacht (5)	Colton, SD	Taopi Hall	February 2, 2020 (3 yr. term)

\*\*\*Red Indicates Election Meetings\*\*\*

*Feb. 2 is a Sunday and SVE offices are not open that day. Please mail prior to the deadline, deliver to a SVE office early during the work week or drop it off in one of our drop box locations.*

## SD Farm Bureau Honors SVE with “Friend of Agriculture” Award

Sioux Valley Energy was honored recently with the “Friend of Agriculture” award by South Dakota Farm Bureau at their Annual Convention held recently in Sioux Falls.

Moody County Farm Bureau submitted the nomination and offered these comments to support the nomination: “Sioux Valley Energy, the electric cooperative who serves our community, worked tirelessly to restore power after winter storm Wesley. Some of us were without electricity for six days or more. They kept customers updated of progress on repairs a couple times a day, along with planned outage notices for those customers affected when power had to be shut off to fix something. Many asked why all power lines could not simply be buried to avoid such future issues, and the explanation on their website made a lot of sense. A lineman who worked winter storm Wesley, just this fall, said that damage repair was still underway and building in more redundancy for customers is still going on. We salute SVE for their valuable service in our community.”

The Friend of Agriculture Award is a high honor given for the purpose of strengthening relationships between agricultural producers and agri-business.



Pictured left to right: Jerry Runia, District III Farm Bureau Director; Tim McCarthy, SVE GM/CEO; and Jane Smith, Moody County Farm Bureau Secretary/Treasurer.

## SVE Develops Community Connections Volunteer Program

Does your community need a helping hand? Sioux Valley Energy employees are ready to help! A 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.*”

To be considered for the SVE Community Connections program, contact **Chinelle** at **800-234-1960**. Please answer the following questions before you call:

1. *Are you a Sioux Valley Energy member?*
2. *What type of service project is it?*
3. *How does it help the community?*
4. *How many volunteers would you need to complete the service project?*
5. *How many hours would be required?*
6. *What is the proposed date(s) of the service project?*

The most recent example of the SVE Community Connections program was the ‘Wrap a Gift’ service project in Brandon. Employees volunteered their time to wrap up to 10 Christmas gifts for SVE members to help ease some of the holiday stress.



# Technical Schools, Colleges Ready the Workforce

Variety of programs offered for in-demand careers

**Brenda Kleinjan**

editor@sdrea.coop

Each year, more than 10,000 people head to area technical schools and technical colleges to develop the skills employers in the region are seeking.

South Dakota's four technical schools – Lake Area Technical Institute in Watertown, Mitchell Technical Institute in Mitchell, Southeast Technical Institute in Sioux Falls and Western Dakota Technical Institute in Rapid City – have been serving students in the region for the last century, with three of the schools starting in 1968 and the fourth starting in 1969. Neighboring states have similar offerings at schools within easy driving distance of South Dakota.

This fall, Lake Area's campus at Watertown, S.D., was at capacity with 2,228 students. The school notes that students have a 99 percent placement rate after graduation.

Nearly 1,200 students attend Mitchell Tech which notes that 99 percent of its graduates find employment or continue their education. The school also notes that 82 percent of its grads stay in the Rushmore State.

For Southeast Tech's 2017-2018 graduates, the school said that 95 percent are employed or continuing their education, with 95 percent of those employed were employed in a field related to their Southeast Tech program.

Western Dakota Tech is the only technical college serving the western half of the state. It notes that 96 percent of its most recent graduates are working, continuing their education or enlisting in the military.



Among the programs offered at Mitchell Technical Institute in Mitchell, S.D., is South Dakota's only power line program for training future line workers.

## National Leaders

Technical colleges across the region have been recognized for excellence in their field.

The \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, awarded every two years, is the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges. With a singular focus on student success, the Prize highlights institutions with outstanding achievements in four areas: student learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings, and high-levels of access and success for students of color and low-income students.

In November, the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program named the nation's top 150 community colleges eligible to compete for the \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges.

Eleven schools based in Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota made the list:

# Minnesota West Community & Technical College

Technical education needs in southwestern Minnesota have been served by the campuses of Minnesota West Community and Technical College for more than 75 years.

The college has five campuses: Canby, Granite Falls, Jackson, Pipestone and Worthington in addition to centers in Luverne and Marshall.

The college offers a wide array of ever-changing programs and services, including career and transfer preparation, industry and customized training, community education, athletics, performing arts, student organizations, clubs, and personal enrichment. The school provides students opportunities to earn an associate degree, diploma or certificate in more than 60 disciplines, plus convenient campus locations throughout southwest Minnesota as well as online learning opportunities.

The school boasts of its small class sizes, personalized attention and focused, hands-on learning. Its technical programs provide students with the practical skills to begin successful careers in a variety of industries immediately upon graduation. Liberal arts programs at Minnesota West are a great starting point for careers or further study in numerous fields. Credits earned in our associate of arts and associate of science programs are designed for seamless transfer to other Minnesota State institutions.



Lake Area Tech in Watertown was nationally recognized as a top community college.

## ■ MINNESOTA

- Alexandria Technical and Community College
- Minnesota State Community and Technical College
- Northland Community and Technical College
- Ridgewater College
- Saint Paul College

## ■ NEBRASKA

- Central Community College
- Northeast Community College

## ■ NORTH DAKOTA

- Bismarck State College
- North Dakota State College of Science

## ■ SOUTH DAKOTA

- Mitchell Technical Institute
- Southeast Technical Institute

Based on strong and improving student outcomes – including in learning, completion rates, employment rates and earnings, and equity – 15 percent of community colleges nationwide have been invited to apply for the Aspen Prize. Data show that over the last two years, student retention, graduation rates, and degree completion have improved at the top tier of 150 Aspen Prize-eligible colleges.

The 150 community colleges named in November 2019 as eligible to compete for the 2021 Prize were selected from a pool of nearly 1,000 public two-year colleges nationwide using publicly available data on student outcomes. Located in 39 states in urban, rural, and suburban areas,

serving as few as 500 students and as many as 75,000 students, these colleges represent the diversity and depth of the community college sector.

The top 10 finalists for the 2021 Aspen Prize will be named in May 2020. The Aspen Institute will then conduct site visits to each of the finalists and collect additional quantitative data, including employment and earnings data. A distinguished jury will make award decisions in

**Lake Area Technical School in Watertown, S.D., was the 2017 Aspen Prize winner, the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges.**

spring 2021.

Lake Area Technical School in Watertown, South Dakota, was the 2017 Aspen Prize winner. In the 2017-2018 school year, Minnesota West was one of 150 top community colleges nationwide competing for the Aspen Prize while MTI was a 2019 Top 10 finalist.



When the South Dakota Legislature convenes in January, it will transform several ideas into legislative bills, some of which will become state law.

# WHERE DOES A BILL COME FROM

## Legislative Research Council

<http://sdlegislature.gov>

When state legislators are in Pierre every year for the annual legislative session, the majority of their time is spent discussing ideas for changes in state law. Ideas vary from changing only a word or two of a current law, an entire section of law, getting rid of a current state law, or creating a new law.

All of the ideas, regardless of their size or scope, must be presented to the Legislature in the form of bills. Bills are simply the ideas recorded on paper in a prescribed format.

Only legislators and legislative committees may present or introduce bills to the Legislature. However, ideas for bills come from a multitude of sources. First, legislators have their own ideas for bills stemming from their expertise in certain fields, experiences they have had, or observations they have made. Special interest groups are another source of ideas. Members of these groups often ask legislators to sponsor bills promoting their interests.

Many ideas for bills come from government agencies. Each year several bills are introduced at the request of the Governor or on behalf of a department in state government. Those who work closely with state law are often able to

recommend ways to improve it.

Finally, ideas for bills come from those individuals represented by the legislators, the constituents who live in their districts. The next step is to put an idea into the form of a bill. Anyone can draft a bill, but the rules of the Legislature require that all bills be in the proper form and style.

A legislator wishing to introduce a bill generally brings the idea or a draft of the proposed bill to the Legislative Research Council, where staff members will either draft the bill or make final preparations on the bill drafted by others.

The legislator who begins to move the bill through the legislative process is known as the prime sponsor. The prime sponsor may introduce the bill independently or seek other legislators to act as co-sponsors of the bill. Senate bills have senators as prime sponsors, and House bills have house members as prime sponsors. However, members of either house may co-sponsor any bill.

Bills may not be introduced until the first day of a legislative session. However, those elected to serve in the upcoming Legislature may pre-file bills with the Legislative Research Council, up to 30 days in advance of the first legislative day. Interim committees may pre-file legislation under the names of individual legislators who served on the committee.

The rules require executive agencies to pre-file any legislation they wish to have considered. A bill in proper form consists of three main parts: the title, the enacting clause, and the body.

- The title gives the reader a brief summary of the subject of the bill. The SD Constitution dictates that bills embrace only one subject, and that subject must be expressed in the title.
- The enacting clause, “BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA,” is also required by the SD Constitution and indicates that everything listed below it is to become the law of the state.
- The body is the remainder of the bill, the part that will actually become law, if passed. It is divided into sections to make it easier to read and to reference.

In addition to the three main parts, a bill also includes a list of sponsors and a number. The name of the prime sponsor always appears first on the bill and then the co-sponsors are alphabetically listed. If a committee is sponsoring a bill, then only the name of the committee is listed. A number is assigned to the bill upon introduction and is used to identify the bill as it works its way through the process.

During session, legislators spend a majority of their time discussing bills, but bills are not the only proposals that come before the Legislature. Legislators may introduce commemorations and resolutions. Commemorations express legislative recognition and listed below are four types of resolutions that may be introduced:

- A simple resolution is unique in that it pertains to and is acted on by only one house. It is used primarily to express an opinion, gratitude, or condolences, or to make a request of the other house.
- A concurrent resolution expresses an opinion of the Legislature, but it has no force of law. Often it is used to persuade Congress to act in a certain way or to make a request of the Governor or a government agency.
- A joint resolution is, by law, used to propose changes to the SD Constitution and submit them to the voters at the next election. It is also used to ratify or propose amendments to the United States Constitution. Unlike the previous two types of resolutions, a joint resolution only contains matters of legislation.
- A resolution of disapproval allows the Legislature to disapprove of any reorganization of the executive branch done by the Governor during the preceding year. It is the newest type of resolution and used less frequently than the others.

# How An Idea Becomes Law in South Dakota

## Idea

- A bill is simply an idea that someone would like to see become law.
- It could be anything from the penalty for committing a crime to the amount of money that can be spent on a state program.
- The idea can come from anyone, but only a State Representative or State Senator can take the idea and guide it to final passage through the State Legislature.

## Drafting

- The drafting of the idea into a bill is done by the Legislative Research Council, the permanent, non-partisan staff of the Legislature.
- A bill may be filed by any member of the House or Senate, and generally more than one legislator will sponsor a bill. The legislator whose name appears first on the bill is the “prime sponsor.”

## Introduction

- A bill is given to the Chief Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate and is assigned a number. If the bill is sponsored by a Senator, it is a Senate Bill. If the bill is sponsored by a Representative, it is a House Bill.
- The bill is given a First Reading in the “House of Origin.” The “House of Origin” is the chamber that sponsored the bill.
- At a First Reading the bill’s number and title are read aloud.
- The Senate President Pro Tempore or Speaker of the House then assigns the bill to a committee.

## Committee

- A committee’s responsibility is to examine a bill carefully, take testimony for and against the bill, and decide what to do with the bill.
- The committee has the following options:
  - Send the bill to the floor with a “Do Pass” recommendation,
  - Amend
  - “Table” the bill, which kills the bill, unless the full body orders the committee to send the bill to the floor (“Smoke-Out”), or
  - Defer the bill to the day after the last Legislative Day, which also kills the bill.

## Debate

- If a bill reaches the floor, it is debated and voted on by the body.
- If it passes, the bill is sent to the other body, where it goes through the same introduction and committee processes.

## Law

- If a bill passes both the House and Senate, it is sent to the Governor.
- If signed by the Governor, the bill becomes law.
- If vetoed by the Governor, the Legislature has an opportunity to decide whether to override or uphold the veto.
- If the Legislature succeeds in overriding the veto, the bill becomes law.

<http://sdlegislature.gov/docs/studentpage/idealaw.pdf>

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**October 19-January 5**

Pheasant Hunting Season, Statewide, Pierre, SD, 605-223-7660

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**November 22-January 5**

Winter Wonderland, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-275-6060

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**November 26-December 26**

Christmas at the Capitol, Pierre, SD, 605-773-3178

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**December 15-March 31**

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

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**December 18**

Annual Legislative Night with Legislators hosted by 29 - 90 Sportsman's Club, GF&P Outdoor Classroom and Office, 6:30 p.m., Sertoma Park, Oxbow Ave., Sioux Falls, SD, 605-362-9827, Public is welcome to attend

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**December 19-21**

Strawbale Winery Twilight Flights, Renner, SD, 605-543-5071

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**December 21-24, 27-28**

1880 Train Holiday Express, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

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**December 31**

Make-A-Wish New Year's Eve Benefit and Dance, Ramkota Hotel & Convention Center, Doors Open at 7 p.m., Aberdeen, SD, 605-370-4588

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**January 10**

Taste of Sturgis, Sturgis City Auditorium, Sturgis, SD, 605-347-3233

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**January 12**

Yoga on the Ice, Main Street Square, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

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**January 24-25: Pro Snocross Races, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876**

Photo courtesy: travelsouthdakota.com

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**January 14-15**

Paw Patrol Live! Race to the Rescue, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

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**January 16-17**

Media One Funkski, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-339-0000

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**January 17**

Justin Moore & Tracy Lawrence, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

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**January 18**

Lakota Games on Ice, Prehistoric Indian Village, Mitchell SD, 605-996-5473

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**January 18**

Heroes Skate Day, Main Street Square, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

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**January 31-February 2**

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

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**January 31-February 2**

Winterfest, Lead, SD, 605-584-1100

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**January 31-February 9**

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

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**February 1**

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

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**February 1**

Living History Fair, Brookings Renegades, Lake Area Technical Institute, Watertown, SD, 605-693-4589, dhuebner@itctel.com

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**February 10-16**

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

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**February 14**

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

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**February 21**

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

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**February 21-22**

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

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**February 26**

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

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**February 27-March 1**

SD State Dart Tournament, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

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**March 3**

RCCA presents Young Irelanders, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

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.