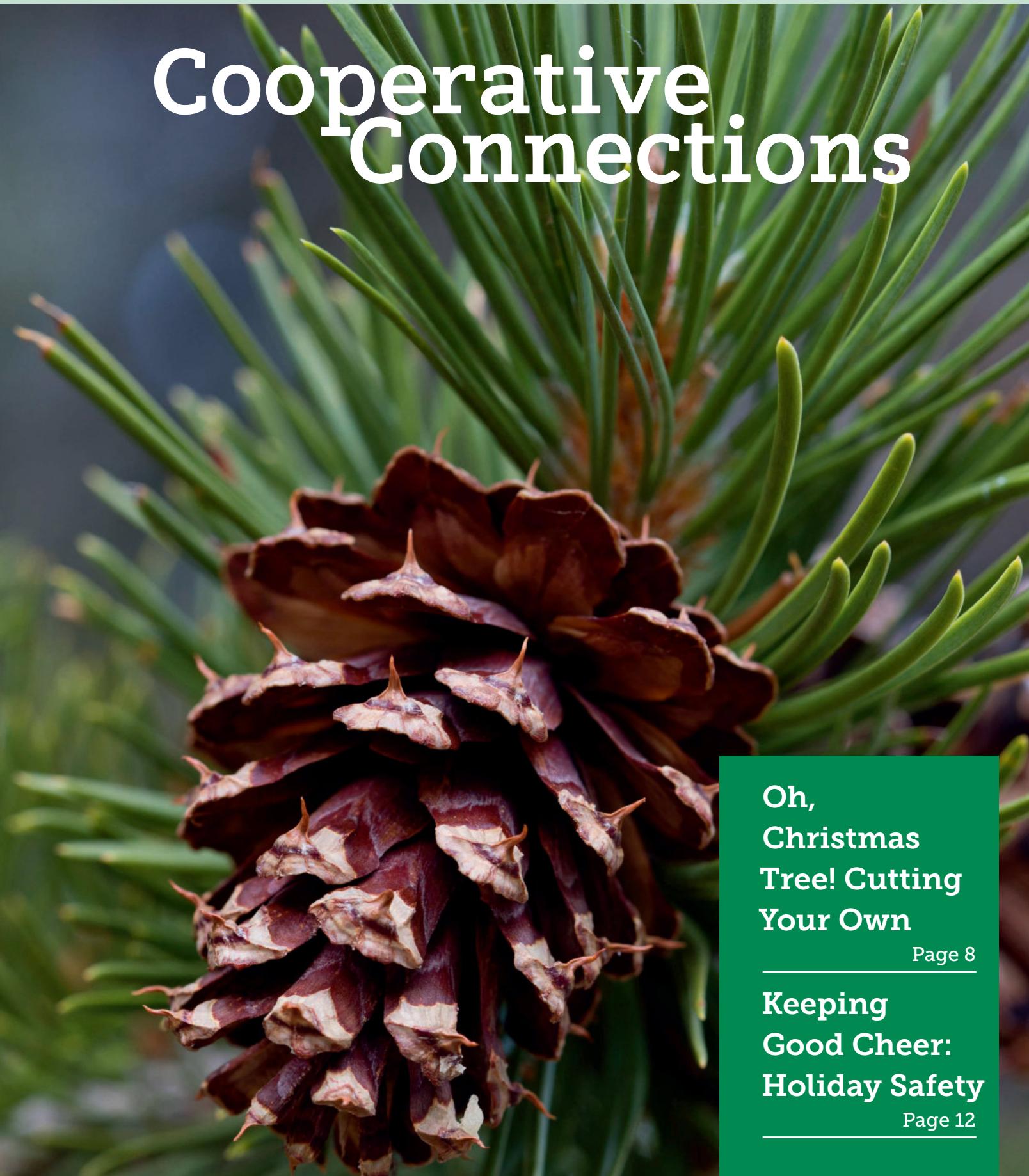


Black Hills Electric

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

December 2019 Vol. 20 No. 8

Cooperative Connections



Oh,
Christmas
Tree! Cutting
Your Own

Page 8

Keeping
Good Cheer:
Holiday Safety

Page 12

With storms and budgets,

Employees and board have busy fall



Walker Witt

CEO and General Manager
wwitt@bhec.coop

At your co-op, especially this year, fall has been hectic, stormy and productive.

While thinking about this month's topic, I did a Google search for quotes on autumn. What I found were inspiring passages using words such as mellow season, beauty, peace...and so on. At your co-op, especially this year, fall has been hectic, stormy, and productive.

In October, we prepared for two snowstorms. One never really materialized as predicted, and the second storm had crews restoring power for hundreds of our members who were out as a result of the storm that ended up being much more severe than forecasted. Our first snowstorm of the year was on October 10. Fortunately, that storm caused little damage and we had no outages.

On Sunday October 20, our second major storm of the year resulted in 227 members without power. Damages were limited to several trees falling through lines and fortunately, no broken poles were found. We saw wind gusts of over 80 miles per hour in the Custer area and up to two feet of snow in the northern part of our system. The most difficult part of that storm was ice buildup on lines and difficulty getting crews to the damage areas.

That storm left over 100 of our members without power overnight. The decision was made to have the crews stop restoration efforts at 10:00 p.m. due to safety concerns. The crews were back out at 5:00 a.m. on Monday morning and all members had their power restored by 10:00 a.m. If fall is the mellow season, I am not looking forward to winter.

This fall has been busy with new construction and upgrades. Due to a very wet spring and summer, many of the projects that would have been completed were put off until this fall, in hopes of better conditions. Although the weather has not necessarily cooperated, some major projects are underway. The most significant of those projects is an upgrade and conversion of an over-head line to underground along Highway 79 from Hermosa north to Spring Creek. This project, which uses 500 MCM underground cable, will increase capacity and allow for growth in that portion of our territory. The cable is the largest cable ever used on the cooperative's system with each of the three cables measuring almost two inches in diameter and weighing more than 4.7 tons per mile.

Your board of directors has also been busy this fall. The October and November board meetings focus on the upcoming year's budget. During the October board meeting your board approved the capital budget of approximately \$300,000. Well over half of that amount is to replace a 2008 bucket truck. Operations is transitioning from large bucket trucks to mid sized trucks. They are less expensive to purchase and maintain, and are more maneuverable, which allows the crews to work out of buckets where previously they would have had to climb. During the November meeting, the directors approved the 2020 budget in the amount of approximately \$21,000,000, of which over half is our wholesale power costs. The 2020 budget does not project the necessity of a rate increase. The budget consists of 95 revenue and expense accounts, the balance sheet, and cash flow estimates. The budget is comprised of over 45 pages and as George W. Bush said, "It is clearly a budget, it's got a lot of numbers in it".

As Thanksgiving approaches, I want to say how thankful I am for all of you. I am thankful for our board and the leadership they provide; I thank our employees for all of their hard work and dedication; and I am so very thankful and appreciative of all of our members. Have a very Happy Thanksgiving!

Black Hills Electric

Cooperative Connections

(ISSN No. 1531-104X)

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High school rodeo short-go winners

Nine dependents of Black Hills Electric Cooperative members won short-go competitions at the South Dakota High School Rodeo. The rodeo was in early June at Belle Fourche.



Allison Clemetson

This year's short-go winners in BHEC's service area were:

Allison Clemetson, rural Keystone, poles, Hill City High School; Lizzy Haiar, rural Rapid City, cutting, Rapid City Stevens High School; Tristan Hunter, Ardmore, tie down roping, Sioux County High School;

Wyatt Tibbitts, rural Hot Springs, steer wrestling, team roping and calf roping, Hot Springs High School; Thane Lockhart, rural Oelrichs, tie down roping and team



Bridget Romey

and team roping, Black Hills State University; Jessica Woodward, rural Custer, poles, Custer High School.

This is the 12th year that electric cooperatives across South Dakota have provided shirts for the short-go winners.



Jessica Woodward

Visiting at the Pringle area meeting



Black Hills Electric Cooperative Manager Walker Witt (by clock) visits with members at the Pringle area meeting. BHEC and the Pringle Volunteer Fire Department co-sponsored the meeting in September. Sixty-six people attended. The co-op paid the fire department on a per person basis and the department collected free-will donations totaling \$132. If you missed this area meeting, the co-op's annual soup suppers will be in February and all are welcome to attend and enjoy a free bowl or two of great soups and many desserts. Watch for the January and February editions of this magazine for times and locations and bring your family and friends.

Happy Thanksgiving!

We hope you can enjoy the holiday with your family and friends.

Our office will be closed on November 28 and 29. Please call 673-4461 or 800-742-0085 to report an outage.

Electrical Safety Tips for the Holidays

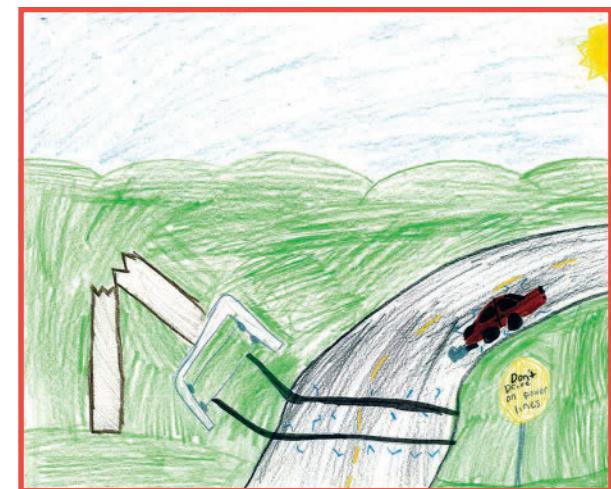
The holiday season is here and Christmas is just weeks away. While it's certainly the best time of the year to spend time with family and friends before the New Year, it's also important that you think about keeping your friends and family safe around all the electricity you'll likely be using. Here are a few essential electrical safety tips for the holidays.

- Before you use any electrical decorations, you should inspect them for damage. Look for damaged sockets, cracked sockets, loose connections and bare or loose wires. All of these things could cause a fire or a serious shock.
 - Once you've confirmed that all your electrical decorations aren't damaged, you should count how many outlets you have in your home and where they're located. You should plan out your displays based on the number of outlets and their location. When putting up the displays, be sure to follow the care and manufacturer's use instructions that came with the electrical decorations. Be sure to use the extension cords with the right amperage rating to match the amperage needs of your electrical products.
 - When you're installing outdoor decorations, you should be very careful when you're decorating near any power lines. You and your equipment should be at least 10 feet from any power lines.
 - Don't overload your home's electrical outlets. Every year, many homeowners end up overloading the electrical outlets in their home because they go overboard when it comes to decorating. Faulty wires and overloaded electrical outlets are the most common causes of fire during the holidays. You should only plug a single high-wattage appliance into every outlet. This will help you prevent overloading the outlets in your home.
 - You should never connect more than three strands of incandescent lights. Connecting more than three strings can cause a fire or trip circuit breakers. You should think about buying LED lights, which are cooler than incandescent lights and use less energy. Be sure that the spotlights that you use to illuminate decorations are far from flammable items, protected from weather, and are well-ventilated. Make sure that you always unplug your decorations before you replace the fuses or bulbs. Turn off the outdoor and indoor electrical decorations before you go to sleep or leave home.
 - Be sure that any electrical decorations and extension cords were made to be useable outdoors. Keep all light strings and extension cords away from water and snow. When decorating outdoors, you should use fiberglass or wooden ladders rather than metal ladders. You should plug outdoor decorations and electric lights into circuits protected by circuit interrupters. You should buy portable outdoor GFCIs if the circuits aren't GFCI protected.
- As you can see, there are many things that you can do to keep your family and friends safe during the holidays.

Source: www.protectamerica.com



KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Don't drive on power lines."

Anna Engelbrecht, 9 years old

Anna is the grand-daughter of Alan and JoAnn Engelbrecht, Brandon, S.D. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, S.D.

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.



Holiday Favorites

Fanny Farmer Fudge

4-1/2 cups sugar	1 cup butter (use butter, not margarine)
1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk	2 tsp. vanilla
2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips	1-1/2 cups chopped walnuts (optional)
2 cups milk chocolate chips	

Mix sugar and milk together; bring to rolling boil. Boil for 6 minutes. Remove from heat; add chocolate chips and butter. Beat with electric mixer until very creamy. Add vanilla and stir well. Add nuts if desired. Pour into a 9x13-inch pan (glass works best) sprayed with cooking spray. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before cutting. Store in airtight container. Will keep for months in refrigerator and still be smooth and creamy.

Nancy Stenson, Fort Pierre, SD

Vanilla Pecan Pie

1 refrigerated pie crust	Vanilla Extract, divided
1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened	1/2 cup light corn syrup
3 eggs, divided	3 T. butter, melted
3/4 cup sugar, divided	1/4 tsp. salt
4 tsp. McCormick® Pure	2 cups pecan pieces, toasted

Prepare crust as directed on package for one-crust pie using 9-inch deep dish pie plate. Beat cream cheese, 1 egg, 1/4 cup sugar and 2 tsp. vanilla in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until well blended and smooth. Spread evenly on bottom of crust. Bake at 350°F. for 15 minutes. Beat remaining 2 eggs and sugar in large bowl with wire whisk until smooth. Add corn syrup, butter, remaining vanilla and salt; stir until well blended. Sprinkle pecans evenly over cream cheese layer. Slowly pour corn syrup mixture over nuts. Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until just set in center. Makes 10 servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 506, Total Fat 34g, Fiber 2g, Protein 7g, Cholesterol 96mg, Sodium 307mg, Carbohydrates 43g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Filled Graham Crackers

1 lb. box honey graham crackers	1/3 cup milk
	1 egg, beaten
1 cup brown sugar	1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 cup butter or margarine	

Line up 22 (unbroken) graham crackers on a sheet of waxed paper. Place remaining crackers in a zip-lock bag and crush fine with a rolling pin. Combine brown sugar, butter, milk and egg. Bring to a boil then cook an additional 7 minutes. Remove from heat; add crushed crackers and vanilla. When mixture has cooled a little, spread filling on 11 of the crackers and top with the other 11. Leave uncovered to keep them crisp or cover for softer crackers.

Mardelle Brown, Redfield, SD

Please send your favorite soup, brunch or seafood 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.

Bright Ideas for Smart Home Lighting



Pat Keegan

Collaborative Efficiency

Smart lighting can do more than just turn on and off at the right time.

Dear Pat and Brad: I've heard a lot about smart lighting for the home. What is it and will it save energy? – Julian

Dear Julian: It seems like every device is getting smarter these days. Since smart-home lighting is so new, many of us could use a little introduction.

At its heart, smart lighting covers a range of bulbs, controls and lighting systems that are programmable through an app on a mobile device, computer or smart speaker. Smart lighting can do more than just turn on and off at the right time. Some smart lighting systems can dim at various times. Some can be connected to a sensor or motion detector so that a light goes on when a door is opened or someone enters a room. Some smart lighting systems can change color so you can set up a holiday light show indoors or outdoors. It can also be practical, providing lighting that matches sunlight during the day and is more relaxing in the evening. You may even be able to play music directly from the bulb!

In most cases, you control smart lighting through your home Wi-Fi. You can communicate to individual smart bulbs or to a hub that, in turn, controls individual bulbs. In some cases, you can use Bluetooth® on your phone to control smart lighting, but you'll need to be within range of the bulb or hub. Smart lighting can also be used outdoors, but the range of your control device could limit this approach.

If the smart bulbs are the type that connect through a hub or connect directly to your Wi-Fi network, you should be able to control them via smart speakers like Google Home, Amazon Echo or Apple HomePod and remotely through the internet or smartphone. While a hub-based system is more expensive, it allows lights to be grouped by floor or room and also uses less bandwidth on your network than running many separate bulbs. Some hub kits also allow you to use regular bulbs instead of requiring more-expensive smart bulbs, which could save you money.

Will smart lighting save energy? That depends on how you light your home and control your lighting now and on how you would control the smart lighting you install in the future. If you use smart lighting to turn lights off when they aren't needed, like when rooms are empty or no one's home, or to reduce the wattage, you will save energy.

How much energy can you save? Lighting accounts for about 6 percent of electricity use in the average home, which means your total cost for all the lighting in your home might only be \$100 per year. If you have some high wattage bulbs that are on for long periods of time every day, your lighting use could be significantly higher than average.

Investments in smart lighting are not likely to pay back as quickly as some energy efficiency measures that control heating or air conditioning. Smart bulbs are more expensive than typical LED bulbs, ranging from \$15 to \$80, and a hub can cost of up to \$125, so it could take a long time to make your money back. Chances are, you're better off investing in smart lighting for the features than the energy savings.

One alternative to smart lighting is smart wall outlets or wall switches. For example, you can plug a lamp with a standard bulb into a smart wall outlet or you can have several lights wired to one smart switch. The downside to smart switches and outlets is that installation could be more challenging and you may not have as many options and features that come with smart lighting.

Another strategy for smart lighting that has been around for a long time and is reasonably priced is to use occupancy sensors, motion sensors or timers as control devices.

The wide number of options and costs makes it difficult to select the best smart lighting for your situation.



Photos, posters, memorabilia and vintage electric appliances are all part of the Power to the People exhibit.

Power to the People

Electrifying Rural South Dakota Exhibit Opens at Museum

The South Dakota Agricultural Heritage Museum in Brookings opened its “Power to the People: Electrifying Rural South Dakota” exhibit in October.

The exhibit explores how electricity changed life on the farm, especially for dairies and hatcheries. It displays how farms used wind turbines to produce electricity and the history of rural electric cooperatives. The museum’s farmhouse kitchen is open for the public to explore a 1949 kitchen. It also shows how electric washing machines changed how we do laundry.

“Today, our society is very dependent on electricity, but imagine turning on the lights for the very first time. Many people in South Dakota can remember that day because a vast number of farms did not have access to electricity until the 1950s. We hope visitors of all generations walk away with a better understanding that wind energy in South Dakota is not new and how much electricity not only brought new technology but better sanitary conditions for families and livestock,” stated Gwen McCausland, director of the Agricultural Heritage Museum.

This exhibit teaches the science of electricity with an interactive circuit board and a pedal-powered light meter sponsored by Basin Electric Power Cooperative in Bismarck, N.D., East River Electric Power Cooperative in Madison, S.D., Sioux Valley Energy in Colman, S.D., and H-D Electric Cooperative in Clear Lake, S.D.

This exhibit was sponsored in part by Coral Bonnemann, a long supporter of the Agricultural Heritage Museum along with Basin Electric, East River Electric, Sioux Valley Energy, and H-D Electric. This exhibit would not have been possible without the private collection of photographs and artifacts from the South Dakota Rural Electric Association in Pierre, S.D., and William Lee of Colman, S.D.

Power to the People: Electrifying Rural South Dakota will be on display for 18 months.

Joseph J. Bonnemann and Coral (Coffey) Bonnemann are natives of Huron, S.D. Joe started college at South Dakota State University in Brookings and then spent time in the Army in the late 1940s, before returning to school. After earning a B.S. degree in agronomy (now plant science) in 1951, Joe was employed at the USDA-ARS experiment station near Newell, S.D. He returned to the SDSU campus in 1961 to supervise the Crop Performance Testing program. Joe retired in 1992. He also completed work for his M.S. in agronomy in 1964, a summer-school graduate of the first graduating class of “SDSU.” Joe passed away in 2014. Coral Ellen Coffey Bonnemann earned a B.S. degree in medical technology from SDSU in 1953. She served on the board of directors of the Brookings Hospital and Brookview Manor, 1972-89, including terms both as secretary and president. She was active in matters of hospital governance on the state and national levels for over 10 years during that time. The Bonnemanns have three children.

The South Dakota Agricultural Heritage Museum’s mission is to inspire a passion for the diverse history, culture and science of agriculture in South Dakota. It is the official state museum for preserving the history of agriculture and rural life of South Dakota. It is a department of South Dakota State University. It is located in the historic Stock Judging Pavilion on the SDSU campus at 977 11th Street, Brookings, S.D. The museum is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call 605-688-6226 or visit www.agmuseum.com.



A pedal-powered light meter allows hands-on learning for visitors.



Riverview Christmas Tree Farm is located near Canton, S.D., near the Big Sioux River.

OH, CHRISTMAS TREE

Cut-Your-Own Tree Opportunities

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

Traditions can be an important part of the holidays and for many, nothing matches the aroma and feel of a fresh-cut Christmas tree.

Many have taken advantage of the cut-your-own tradition at the Black Hills National Forest. But for those not wanting to trek across the Rushmore State to the Black Hills, Christmas tree farms closer to home have been part of holidays.

In eastern South Dakota, families have been cutting their own trees at the Riverview Christmas Tree Farm at Canton, S.D., since 1989.

The tree farm is a family business that was opened in 1989 by Bill and Darlene Keizer. The business is now operated by the Todd and Shari Gannon family.

Families search the acres of trees looking for the perfect tree for their family. Five tree varieties ranging in sizes from six to 10 feet provide families several options. The tree farm provides the saw for cutting the tree and a tractor/trailer brings the family and their tree back to the farm's lodge to enjoy hot drinks and holiday treats.

The farm is open four weekends in November and December. In 2019, the farm will be open Saturdays (Nov. 23, Nov. 30, Dec. 7 and Dec. 14) from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays (Nov. 24, Dec. 1, Dec. 8 and Dec. 15) from Noon to 5 p.m. as well as Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 28 (2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.) and Black Friday, Nov. 29 (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)



Photo by SD Tourism

Visitors to the tree farm can enjoy the beautiful scenery, shopping for holiday crafts and Christmas wreaths. They can also pet the animals in the pen and see Santa!

Riverview Christmas Tree Farm Tree Varieties

- Fraser Fir
- Balsam Fir
- Canaan Fir
- White Pine
- Black Hills Spruce

Riverview Christmas Tree Farm features cut-your-own trees, ranging from six to nine feet tall, sell for \$9 to \$11 per foot, depending on the variety. Pre-cut trees, ranging from six to 10 feet tall sell for \$7 to \$8 per foot.

Learn more about Riverview Christmas Tree Farm at <http://www.riverviewtreefarm.com/>

Tips for Trees Cut at Black Hills National Forest

Cutting Guidelines

- The maximum tree height is 20 feet.
- Cut the stump within six inches of the ground.
- Cut and scatter the limbs and other unused parts of the tree so they lie within a foot of the ground.

Setting Up Your Tree

- Keep your tree as fresh as possible.
- Store your tree upright in a bucket of water in the garage or basement until you are ready to move it indoors.
- In the house, keep the tree well watered at all times.
- Keep the tree away from fireplaces, stoves or heating vents.

Kinds of trees available:

- **Ponderosa pine** is noted for its full shape and long graceful needles. It grows almost everywhere in the Black Hills.
- **Spruce** is very popular as a holiday tree. It grows at higher elevations and on wetter, north-facing slopes and drainage bottoms. Spruce has a classic tapered form and its short needles allow for easy stringing of lights and ornaments.
- **Juniper** is a shorter tree found at lower elevations in the southern and western parts of the Black Hills. Many people like its full shape and bluish-green coloring.

Cut Your Own Fresh Christmas Tree This Year From the Black Hills National Forest

Christmas tree tags will be available Nov. 12 to Dec. 24, 2019, at Forest Service offices in western South Dakota and northeast Wyoming.

The Black Hills National Forest will also continue the Fourth-Grade Free Christmas Tree Program again this holiday season.

Fourth-graders are eligible for a FREE Christmas tree permit through the Every Kid Outdoors initiative. Every Kid Outdoors is a nationwide call to action to build the next generation of conservationists. All fourth graders are eligible to receive a fourth-grade pass that allows free access to federal lands and waters across the country for a full year.

In order for students to receive a free Christmas tree permit, they must present a valid fourth grade pass or paper voucher printed from the Every Kid Outdoors website: <https://everykidoutdoors.gov>. To obtain the voucher, visit the website, click on the "Get your pass" button and follow the instructions. Print out the paper voucher and bring it with you to a district office or the supervisor's office on the Black Hills National Forest.

White spruce, ponderosa pine and western juniper are available and can be cut in many parts of the National Forest.

Each permit is accompanied by a handout with guidance about appropriate tree removal. Trees may not be cut in developed recreation sites, Forest Service administrative sites, active timber sales, the Black Hills Experimental Forest near Rochford, the Black Elk Wilderness, the Beaver Park area near Sturgis or within Spearfish Canyon.

Individual permits cost \$10, up to a maximum of five permits are allowed per individual and the maximum allowable height of cut trees is 20 feet. Permits require that you cut the entire tree, leaving no more than six inches of stump and that you cut unused branches so they lay flat on the ground.

The adhesive permit tag must be attached before a tree is removed from the cutting area; a citation can be issued for possession of a cut-but-untagged tree, even if a tag is available in person or in your vehicle.

Trees should be placed in water as soon as possible to help keep needles fresh. Once indoors, trees should be placed away from stoves, heaters or heating ducts. After Christmas, used trees should be disposed of properly as yard waste. Do not dump used trees on national forest land.

There are no refunds for uncut trees or unused permits. Please note that Forest Service offices will be closed on Thanksgiving Day. Dec. 24 is the last day permits will be sold at Forest Service offices. Private vendors may sell tags until Dec. 24.

Tags are available by mail from the Forest Supervisor's Office, 1019 North 5th Street, Custer, SD, 57730. Enclose a check or money order in the amount of \$10 for each tree permit, up to a maximum of five trees per individual as well as a self-addressed stamped envelope. The Forest Service will mail tags and cutting instructions.

BHEA's humble beginnings

The following is from *The Custer Weekly*, May 18, 1960 and continued from the November issue of *Black Hills Electric Cooperative Connections*:

The association signed a loan contract with the federal government in the amount of \$72,000. Soon following, an additional loan of \$108,000 was secured and the project was given an over-all ceiling of \$2,500,000.

On September 12, 1941, 12 bids were opened for construction of approximately 194 miles of power lines. All were rejected as being too high. On the 23rd of that month, bids were again considered and again rejected.

The office was moved to the rear of the building that now houses the ASC office. Again, bids were opened, the contracts let for poles, transformers and other necessary equipment. Then it was winter again and the rural people of the area were still in the dark.

The board was becoming discouraged as copper and other materials were scarce because of the Lend Lease program to allies of the U.S. and the war in Europe.

Because of war demands, the board of directors passed a resolution closing the project for the duration. Henry Barnes resigned as secretary, Sam Kirk as vice president and Harvey Hawkins as superintendent. The office was closed in April of 1942. The rural people were to remain in the dark during World War II.

On the third day of May, 1945, the association was reactivated and Henry Barnes, having just returned from the South Pacific, was appointed as coordinator. A temporary office was established in the Custer selective service office with O. P. Johnson becoming the secretary and Maxine Avery the bookkeeper.

In August, the office was moved to Sixth Street in Custer and construction was begun on the first leg of the lines.

When December came again, the rural people were still in the dark but rays of hope were brightening the horizon.



Black Hills Electric Association's early office in downtown Custer and its two line trucks.

During the early summer of 1946, delay after delay, due to strikes by steel workers and shortages of copper, slowed construction. The lack of cooperation by private power companies in negotiating contracts played no small part in the delay.

Four hundred homes were awaiting wiring and as materials became available, work progressed. The contractor notified the co-op that the line from a point near Custer to, and including Pringle, was ready to be energized. The Rural Electrification Administration in Washington gave final approval and the date for closing was set for July 20, 1946 at the Pringle substation.

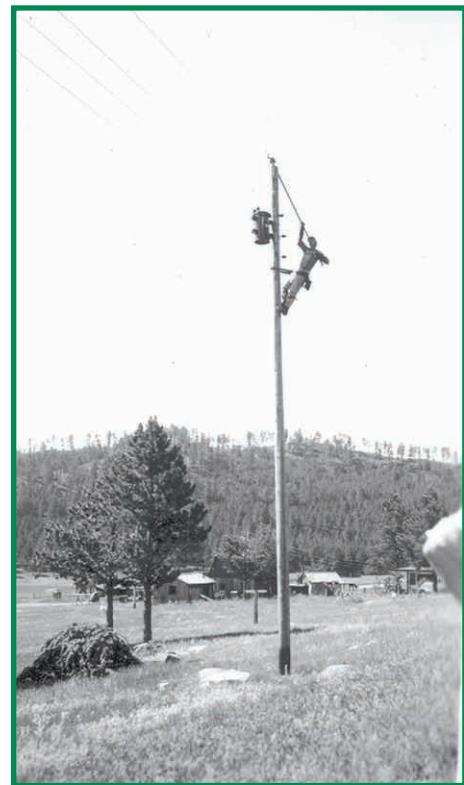
With a hot stick and rubber gloves borrowed from another co-op, George Frink, the association's vice-president, closed the switches and started the borrowed transformer humming.

Thus, exactly six years, six months, and three days after the area's REA movement was started in Hill City, the first light was turned on.

Thirty additional homes were connected that day and at last, it seemed that the ranch people of the Black Hills would soon be out of the dark.

From 1946 to 1960, Black Hills Electric Co-op has grown to 1,500 members, and is now a big business, with member-

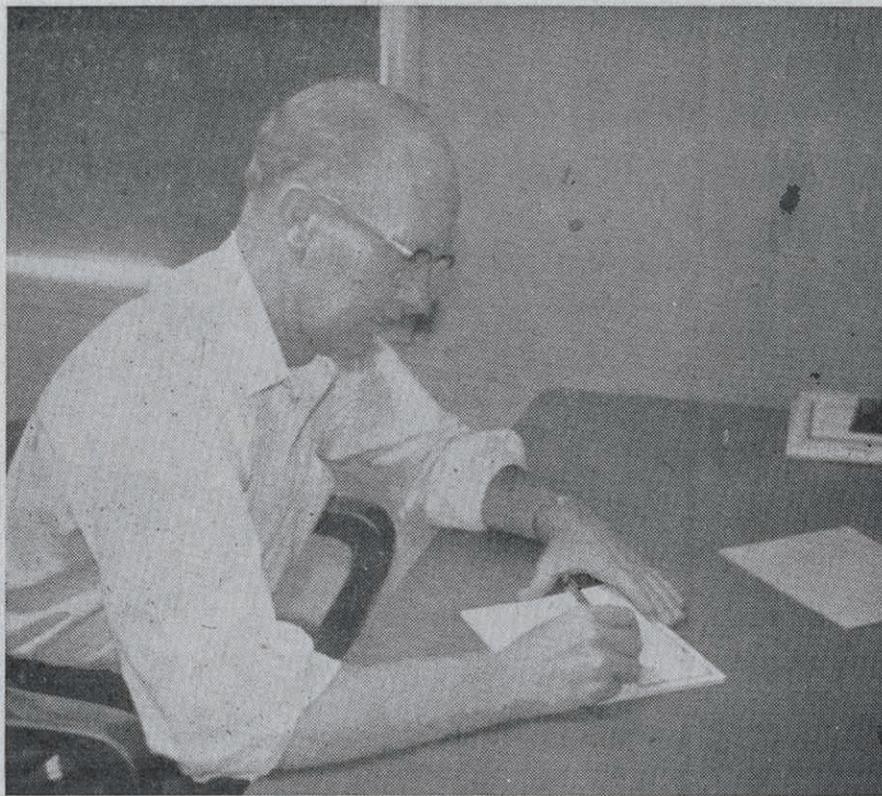
owners in parts of Custer, Fall River and Pennington counties.



A lineman with Black Hills Electric Association building the line between Custer and Pringle in 1946. Much of the construction was done by hand with limited mechanized equipment. Many holes were also dug by hand, using a long shovel called a banjo and a long shovel with a 90-degree bend at the shovel head, called a spoon.

From *The Custer Bi-Weekly*, July 6, 1961

Hundreds Of Checks . . .



. . . WERE SIGNED THIS WEEK by Dick Chard, office manager of the Black Hills Electric Cooperative as Capital Credit checks were sent to members consumers throughout the six-county area which it serves, Custer, Fall River, Pennington, Lawrence, Meade and Shannon. Henry Barnes, manager of the electric utility, says that the nearly 2000 checks represent thousands of dollars which will give a boost to the Black Hills economy. The money, being distributed to its members, is a return of a portion of the capital furnished to the Cooperative by the members since the Cooperative was started. The period covered is from 1946 through 1956. As the financial condition of the Cooperative permits, Capital Credit checks will be mailed to the members from time to time, Barnes concluded.

BHEC's seven managers

Black Hills Electric Cooperative has been guided by seven managers over the past 75 years.

Henry Barnes was the first manager, serving from 1947 to 1964. He was instrumental in establishing the cooperative. He was from Pringle.

Elmer Flatt, from Wall, was the longest serving manager – from 1964 to 1984.

Steve Glaim served from 1984 to 1987.

Mike Bunney served from 1987 to 1990.

Creden Huber served from 1990 to 1995.

Dan Hutt, from Newcastle, Wyo., served from 1995 to 2014.

Walker Witt, from Custer, is the current manager, taking over in 2014.

BHEA's First Meeting

Following the organizational meeting in January of 1940, several of the original incorporators met on February 27, 1940, at 7 p.m. at the Royal Pine Hotel in Hill City.

The purpose of the meeting was to adopt bylaws, to consider and act upon applications for membership in the corporation, and to take action on any business necessary for the formation of the corporation.

Prior to the meeting, the articles of incorporation had been filed with the office of the Secretary of State in Pierre. On February 23, 1940, the Secretary of State issued a certificate of incorporation in the name of Black Hills Electric Association, Inc., allowing the association to do business in South Dakota.

The bulk of the three-hour meeting was spent on developing the association's bylaws, which included establishing a membership fee. It was decided that to be a member of BHEA, a person would have to purchase 10 shares of stock in the corporation at fifty cents per share.

It was also established that once power was made available, the member would purchase all of their energy used on their premises from the association.

Once the bylaws were approved, each of the incorporators in attendance purchased 10 shares of capital stock in the association. These first BHEA members were: Harvey Hawkins, Fred Root, Henry Barnes, Wintah Elliott, William Rozay, John Benton, John Beckmann, Frank Hoffman, Charles Clinton, Howard Durst and Chas. Welty.

These 11 men became the first board of directors for the association and the first board meeting was held at 10 p.m. following the incorporation meeting.

Frank Hoffman was elected president, Henry Barnes, vice president, and Chas. Welty was elected secretary.

An audit was done that night on the association's books before William Rozay took over as treasurer. The association had \$15.06 in the bank and owed Welty \$5.60 for a corporate seal. Thus BHEA was on its way to electrifying the Black Hills.

Keeping Good Cheer

Holiday Safety and Crime Protection

National Neighborhood Watch

<https://nnw.org/holiday-safety>

The jolly man in red is the only visitor that's supposed to be entering homes stealthily this Christmas, shimmying down chimneys and stealing bites of cookies washed down with gulps of milk.

But, for too many, St. Nick isn't the only unexpected holiday visitor. Porch pirates are stealing holiday joy and other criminals are itching to find unintended digital portals into homes.

A 2017 study titled "Package Theft Report: Porch Pirates, Purchase Habits and privacy" by Schorr.com found that nearly 1 in 3 Americans say they have experienced package theft. A separate study by www.insurancequotes.com found that around 25.9 million Americans have had a package delivered during the holiday shopping season stolen, up from 23.5 million reported porch thefts in 2015.

General Holiday Safety and Crime Prevention Tips

Courtesy of the Knoxville, Tenn., Police Department

At Home

- Make sure all doors and windows have secondary locks (window pins, deadbolts, dowels, etc.) and use them!
- Don't hide spare keys in mailboxes or planters or under doormats.
- Ensure that dark areas and entrances have outdoor lights that are turned on after dark or are activated by sensors.
- Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed so they do not conceal doors and windows. Remember, overgrown foliage can provide a hiding place for criminals.
- Place gifts where they can't be seen from the outside.



- Consider safe deposit boxes for coin and stamp collections, seldom-worn jewelry, stock bonds, etc.
- Be sure to mail cards, checks or gift certificates from the Post Office or at a blue U.S. Postal Service collection box.
- Lock your vehicle and remove all the valuables. Yes, even in your driveway.

Strangers at Your Door

- Use caution anytime there is a stranger at your door.
- Be suspicious of unexpected sales calls or deliveries. Ask for identification.
- Be aware of scams that criminals commit to take advantage of people's generosity during the holidays.

Avoid Porch Theft:

Five tips to Protect Your Packages

- Network with Neighbors
- Have Packages Delivered to Work
- Leave Specific Drop-off Instructions
- Use a Smart Lock
- Install Security Cameras



Outdoor decorations can also be targets of holiday grinches.

- Investigate charities before making donations. Ask how the funds will be used.

Leaving for the Holidays

- Ask a trusted friend, neighbor or Neighborhood Watch member to watch your home.
- Use timers for lights and radios while you're away.
- Remember to make arrangements for mail and newspapers.

After the Holidays

- Don't advertise expensive toys, electronics or other gifts received by the boxes left for garbage collections. Compress large boxes and place them in black garbage bags for pick-up.
- Add new items to your home inventory. Take photos or video of all items of value in your home and list each item's make, model, serial number and other information.
- Engrave new items to help identify them in the event they are stolen.

What to do if you've become a victim of a porch pirate

- Check with your delivery company to make sure your package was actually delivered.
- Know exactly what's in the missing box.
- If you see the thief, pay attention to

Six Ways to Grinch-Proof Your Holiday Light Displays

- Shut down at night
- Set up surveillance
- Crime-proof your yard
- Consider bringing in valuable items at night
- Stay connected
- Report, report, report

what his or her vehicle looks like and its license plate number. Second to that, get the thief's physical description – gender, approximate height and weight and what they're wearing – so you can tell an officer.

- Call 911 and ask for an officer to come to your home.
- If you have a security camera on your home, get a copy of the video to police. Ask your neighbors if their cameras captured the thief in action.

Source: National Neighborhood Watch, A Division of the National Sheriffs' Association

Keeping Your Devices Secure

- **Use Security Software.** Install anti-virus software, anti-spyware software and a firewall. Set your preference to update these protections often. Installing these types of programs will help protect against intrusions and infections that can compromise your computer files and passwords. These programs install security patches for your operating system and other software programs.
- **Avoid Phising Emails.** Don't open files, click on links or download programs sent by strangers. Opening a file from someone you don't know could expose your system to a computer virus or spyware that captures your passwords or other information you type.
- **Be Wise about Wi-Fi.** Before you send personal information over your laptop or smartphone on a public wireless network in a coffee shop, library, airport, hotel or other public place, see if your information will be protected. If you use an encrypted website, it protects only the information you send to and from that site. If you use a secure wireless network, all the information you send on that network is protected.
- **Lock Up Your Laptop.** Keep financial information on your laptop only when necessary. Don't use an automatic login feature that saves your user name and password and always log off when you're finished. That way, if your laptop is stolen, it will be harder for a thief to get at your personal information.
- **Read Privacy Policies.** Yes, they can be long and complex, but they tell you how the site maintains accuracy, access, security and control of the personal information it collects; how it uses the information and whether it provides information to third parties. If you don't see or understand a site's privacy policy, consider doing business elsewhere.



Wall Elementary students eat their lunch, complete with locally raised beef.

BEEF: IT'S FOR LUNCH

Beef to School Program Launched

Jocelyn Romey

jocelyn.romey@sdrea.coop

Local beef is on the lunchtime menu for Wall, S.D., students, thanks to the efforts – and donations – of local producers and businesses.

“We consider this a must-do for the kids and our community,” said Ken Charfauros, owner of Wall Meats Processing, who with others, spearheaded the Beef to School program in the school in January 2019.

The program has grown from that first 90-pounds of locally raised beef eaten by more than 200 students in the school. It is now a sustainable program in Wall and serves as an example to area schools that value the educational and financial benefits of serving up beef from local ranches. Other South Dakota schools currently in the pilot phase of implementing this program are in Custer, Edgemont, Faith, New Underwood and Philip.

In 2018, Wall Meats Processing partnered with the school, Wall FFA and the Ag Committee of Wall Economic Development Corporation to plan and implement the project. Three months later, ranchers began donating the beef and Wall Meat Processing contributed the cost of processing and delivering. This community partnership has grown more effective and continues to provide



U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson joined Wall students for lunch to learn about the district's Beef to School program.

local beef to the school district.

Wall Economic Development believes that the purpose of this project is to provide an educational opportunity and help develop the local economy. Students receive an education on what they eat and where it comes from. They are also able to actively learn about beef nutrition through outreach conversations.

"This program is a good educational piece for FFA students and a good project for future farmers," said Charfauros.

But it's not just the students who are learning. Charfauros said his staff and those involved in developing this program are also learning how to effectively cut healthy meat selections that fit every schools' requirements. The Wall School District requires meat that has a 90 percent lean to 10 percent fat ratio. However, other schools who are in the pilot phase of the program may require different ratios. How the meat is cut and delivered is determined by local schools as well as federal and state regulations.

Another purpose of this program is to benefit the community. Charfauros commented that the local economy profits when local people buy local things and



that money is saved when the school district does not have to pay federal fees for meat being delivered from out of state.

"The major thing about local food is that it helps your local economy. That money goes back to the community and gets spent several times," said local rancher Josh Geigle, who participated in the Wall Beef to School program.

Due to the current success of the Beef to School program, South Dakota's leadership is taking notice. State Rep. Johnson

and Sens. Thune and Rounds along with the South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development reached out to Charfauros to discuss the programs achievements. From Charfauros' outreach, more school districts are showing interest in adopting the program and promoting beef nutrition, student education and local economic development.

"This is an outreach program to our communities, our producers and our kids," Charfauros said.



Members of the Wall FFA Chapter along with area beef producers, the Wall Economic Development Corporation and Wall Meats Processing partnered with the Wall School District to implement the Wall Beef to School program in 2018.

October 19-January 5

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

November 15-December 18

Black Hills Christmas Tree
Permit Season, Custer, SD,
605-673-9200

November 22-23

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

November 22-January 5

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

November 25

Hill City Olde Tyme Christmas
Parade, 4:30 p.m. downtown,
Hill City, SD, 605-574-2365

November 26-December 26

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

November 28-29

Black Hills Electric Office
closed, 605-673-4461 or
1-800-742-0085 to report an
outage, Happy Thanksgiving!

November 29

Annual Holiday Open House,
Cultural Heritage Center,
Pierre, SD, 605-773-3458

November 29-30

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

November 30

Holiday Celebration and
Winter Market, Rapid City, SD,
605-716-7979

**November 30 and
weekends until Christmas**

Trees and Trains, 10 a.m. to
6 p.m., S.D. State Railroad
Museum, Hill City, SD,
605-574-2365

December 14: Frontier Christmas,
Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474**December 6**

Hermosa American Legion
Auxiliary Bingo Dinner, 4:30
to 6:45 p.m. meal, bingo
at 7 p.m., American Legion
building, Hermosa, SD,
605-255-5977

December 6-7, 12-14, 19-21

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

December 6-8

The Birds of Christmas,
Various times and
locations, Hot Springs, SD,
www.hotsprings-sd.com

December 7

Holidazzle Light Parade,
Spearfish, SD, 605-717-9294

December 7

Custer Christmas Parade,
5:30 p.m., downtown, Custer,
SD, 605-673-2244

December 7

Christmas in the Hills Parade
and Tree Lighting, 4 to 7 p.m.
downtown, Hot Springs, SD,
605-745-4140

December 7

Rapid City Garden Club's 58th
Annual Wreath & Centerpiece
Sale, Canyon Lake Activity
Center, Rapid City, SD,
605-343-0710

December 7-8

Living Christmas Tree,
Civic Arena, Aberdeen, SD,
605-229-6349

**December 7-8, 14-15,
21-24 and 27-28**

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

December 14

27th Annual Christmas for
Kids, Noon to 3 p.m., Custer
High School, Custer, SD,
605-673-2663

December 14-15

Black Hills Cowboy
Christmas, Lead, SD,
605-584-2067

December 15-March 31

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

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

January 7-9

Dakota Farm Show,
Vermillion, SD, 800-873-1411

January 16-17

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

January 24-25

Pro Snocross Races,
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

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.