

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



SOUTH DAKOTA STAR QUILTS

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Members, Milestones, & Moments Ahead



Michelle Fischer

Director of Communications

& Member Services

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Your cooperative has been busy, and the momentum continues in the months ahead! A full recap of our 80th Annual Meeting will be featured in the next newsletter. The milestone meeting, held May 29 at the Ramkota in Rapid City, highlighted Black Hills Electric Cooperative's continued focus on system reliability, financial strength, and wildfire mitigation. Members also celebrated another year without a lost-time accident.

Incumbent directors Dave Lindblom and Jim Preston were re-elected, scholarships were awarded, and members were encouraged to sign up for the September bus tour to Dry Fork Station.

With the annual meeting now behind us, we're shifting gears and looking forward to a summer full of sunshine, community, and connection.

Here's what's coming up:

Rochford Day – July 12

Co-op representatives will be on hand to support and celebrate this tight-knit community. Be sure to stop by, say hello, and pick up some almost lavish gifts while you're there.

Summer Lunch Program

We are assembling sack lunches for kids in the area for two weeks this summer. We believe every child should have access to a nutritious meal, and we are proud to help meet that need while school is out.

Fall River County Fair Dinner – July 31

We're proud to help serve and co-sponsor the chuckwagon dinner at the Edgemont Fairgrounds. Join us for a delicious meal as we support this wonderful community event and its festivities.

Custer County Fair Dinner – August 7

We'll be co-sponsoring and helping cook the kick-off dinner while celebrating everything from youth exhibits to livestock shows at the Custer County Fairgrounds. We're proud to support the next generation of agricultural leaders.

Ag Appreciation Event – August 18

We invite all producers, ranchers, and rural community members to join us at the Ag Appreciation Event at the Fairgrounds. This event is our way of saying thank you to those who sustain our local food supply and drive our rural economy. Attending members will receive discounted rodeo tickets, free gate admission to the Fair, and a complimentary meal. See page 11 for more details.

Co-op Day – August 28

Join us for the 4th Annual Co-op Day at the BHEC headquarters. Enjoy a free lunch, meet your employees, and enter to win some great giveaways. Don't miss our special safety demonstration, an important part of keeping our community safe. It's always a member favorite, and we look forward to seeing you there!

Dry Fork Station Bus Tour – September 10

Curious about where your power comes from? Do not miss our bus tour to Dry Fork Station in Gillette, Wyoming. It is an eye-opening experience, and seats fill quickly. Find the sign-up sheet on page 10 to reserve your spot.

Pringle Area Meeting – September 11

Join us for the Pringle Area Meeting. It's a great chance to connect with your co-op, hear important updates, and ask questions. Plus, all proceeds from the event will go directly to support the Pringle and Argyle Volunteer Fire Departments. We look forward to seeing you there!

We're excited for a full season of community involvement and member engagement! Whether you meet us at a fair, join us for Co-op Day, or climb aboard the bus tour, we're grateful for the opportunity to connect and serve. Your cooperative is proud to participate in a variety of events across our service area this summer, and we look forward to seeing you along the way.



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

BLACK HILLS ELECTRIC

(ISSN No. 1531-104X)

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BLACK HILLS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of Black Hills Electric Cooperative, 25191 Cooperative Way, P.O. Box 792, Custer, S.D. 57730-0792. Black Hills Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to their cooperative and living better with electricity. Also available at www.bhec.coop.

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Subscription information: Black Hills Electric Cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Black Hills Electric Cooperative, 25191 Cooperative Way, Custer, S.D. 57730-0792, and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to Black Hills Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 792, Custer, S.D. 57730-0792. Address all other correspondence to: Cooperative Connections, P.O. Box 792, Custer, S.D. 57730-0792 Telephone: (605) 673-4461; Fax: (605) 673-3147; e-mail: bhec@bhec.coop; website: www.bhec.coop.

COMMITTED TO LEADERSHIP: DON ANDERSEN COMPLETES BLC PROGRAM

Don Andersen recently earned his Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). This advanced training builds on the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate and requires completion of 10 credits in areas such as governance, risk management, power supply, and financial oversight. By earning the BLC, Don has shown a strong commitment to continued learning and effective cooperative leadership. His dedication helps strengthen our board and better serve our members. Congratulations, Don!

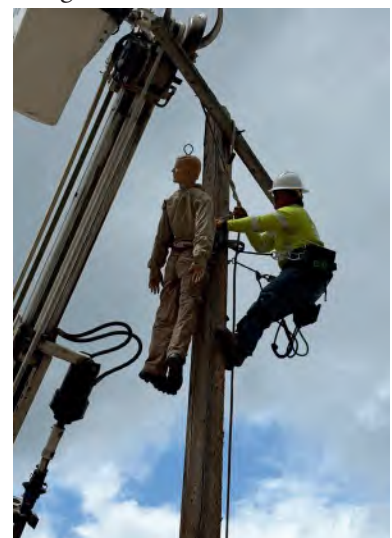


Vice President Dave Lindblom (L) and Treasurer Don Andersen (R)

WELCOMING OUR NEWEST LINE CREW MEMBER TO THE TEAM

Black Hills Electric Cooperative is proud to welcome Parker Noem to the line crew as a temporary employee in a 1,000-hour support role.

Parker is a graduate of Mitchell Technical Institute's Powerline Construction & Maintenance program and a proud alumnus of Custer High School. The cooperative remains committed to investing in its workforce and infrastructure, ensuring that it can meet the needs of its members both now and in the future. With Parker on board, the line crew is better equipped to tackle the challenges ahead and keep the community energized and connected.



Parker Noem practices pole-top rescue during a safety training.

Playground Safety

Source: National Safety Council

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, each year, more than 200,000 children go to U.S. hospital emergency departments with injuries associated with playground equipment.

As the weather warms up and trips to the park become frequent, take a moment to familiarize yourself with the risks on playgrounds and how you can prevent injuries.

Check for Playground Hazards

Nearly 80% of playground injuries are caused by falls. Watch out for these potential hazards when taking kids to the playground, and report any hazards observed.

Improper ground surfaces: Surfaces around playground equipment should have at least 12 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand or pea gravel, or mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like materials. Playgrounds should be free of exposed concrete footings, rocks or tree stumps.

Overcrowded play areas: The area under and around play equipment should be a minimum of 6 feet in all directions while swing set areas should be twice the height of the suspending bar both in back and front of the swings. Structures more than 30 inches high should be at least 9 feet apart.

Unprotected elevated areas: Platforms higher than 30 inches should have guardrails or barriers.

Head entrapment spaces: Openings between rails, bars, rungs and even ropes of cargo nets should be less than 3 1/2 inches or more than 9 inches.

Sharp points and edges: Playground equipment should be free of protruding bolt ends, "S" hooks, and other sharp points and edges.

Visit the American Academy of Pediatrics webpage on playground safety to learn more.

Avoid Strangulation Hazards

The American Academy of Pediatrics cautions that children should not wear or play with anything that could get caught on equipment and become a strangulation hazard.

- Never attach or allow children to attach ropes, jump ropes, clotheslines or pet leashes to play equipment.
- Leave sweatshirts with drawstrings and necklaces at home.
- Remove bike helmets when playing on the playground.

Be Cautious of Too Much Sun Exposure

Playgrounds should have full or partial sun protection between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., peak exposure time.

- Limit playtime at peak sun exposure time and know the signs of heat illnesses.
- Avoid burns; if playground equipment is hot to the touch, it is too hot for your child's bare skin.

Allow Only Age-Appropriate Activities

The Consumer Product Safety commission lists age-appropriate equipment in the Public Playground Safety Handbook. There is no substitute for parental supervision, especially for young children.



"Don't go outside during lightning storms!"

Marah Kinnunen, Age 8

Marah warns readers about the dangers of going outside during a lightning storm. Thank you for your picture, Marah! Marah's parents are Reuben and Sarine Kinnunen from Hayti, 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.

Delectable CHICKEN

CHICKEN MILANESE

Ingredients:

1 pkg. McCormick® Chicken Parmesan One Sheet Pan Seasoning Mix
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1 lb. thin-sliced boneless skinless chicken breasts
1 tbsp. oil

Method

Preheat oven to 400°F. Empty Seasoning Mix into shallow dish. Add Parmesan cheese. Brush chicken with oil. Coat evenly on both sides with Seasoning Mix. Discard any remaining Seasoning Mix.

Place chicken in single layer on foil-lined shallow baking pan sprayed with no stick cooking spray.

Bake 15 minutes or until cooked through, turn chicken halfway through cook time.

Mccormick.com

SWEET AND SOUR CHICKEN

Ingredients:

3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
2 tbsps. fat or oil
1/4 cup water
2 tbsps. cornstarch
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup vinegar
20 oz. can pineapple chunks (drained, reserving juice)
3 tbsps. soy sauce
3/4 cup green pepper strips
1/4 cup onion (thinly sliced)

Method

Cube chicken into one inch squares; brown in fat. Add water. Cook in water until tender. In another pan combine cornstarch, salt, brown sugar, vinegar, pineapple juice and soy sauce.

Cook until slightly thick, stirring constantly. Pour sauce over hot chicken. Let stand at least 10 minutes. Add green pepper, onion, and pineapple chunks. Cook two to seven minutes until warmed through. Serve over hot rice. *Makes 4 servings.

Jan Grage
Clay-Union Electric Member

CHICKEN POT PIE

Ingredients:

1 pkg. prepared pie crust (top and bottom)
1/3 cup butter or margarine
1/3 cup chopped onion
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1 3/4 cup Progresso™ chicken broth (from 32 oz. carton)
1/2 cup milk
2 1/2 cup chicken/turkey (shredded, cooked)
2 cups frozen mixed vegetables (thawed)

Method

Heat oven to 425°F. Prepare pie crusts as directed on box for two-crust pie using nine inch glass pie pan. In two quart saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add onion; cook two minutes, stirring frequently, until tender. Stir in flour, salt and pepper until well blended.

Gradually stir in broth and milk, cooking and stirring until bubbly and thickened. Stir in chicken and mixed vegetables. Remove from heat. Spoon chicken mixture into crust-lined pan. Top with second crust; seal edge and flute. Cut slits in several places in top crust. Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until crust is golden brown. During last 15 to 20 minutes of baking, cover crust edge with strips of foil to prevent excessive browning. Let stand five minutes before serving.

Cindy Foster
Codington-Clark Electric Member

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2025. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Efficiency Tips for Older Homes



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services
Group

Q: How do I improve the efficiency of my older home while keeping its charm?

A: I love old homes. The details and craftsmanship have always drawn me to them. The features of older homes can make them less efficient than modern construction, but it doesn't have to be that way. You can keep the charm and make your home more efficient.

Start by prioritizing the invisible upgrades that make your home more comfortable and efficient. When we were kids, I don't think any of us thought, "When I grow up, I want to spend my hard-earned money on insulation." It's not as exciting as new countertops or a remodeled bathroom, but air sealing and insulation can save you money every month. Then you can apply the savings to aesthetic improvements.

Many older homes are not properly insulated. Insulation has several benefits beyond sealing your home and keeping outdoor air from seeping in. It reduces outdoor noise, makes your home quieter and improves your overall comfort.

Always properly air seal before you insulate. Older homes with pocket doors, coved ceilings, dumbwaiters, doors to attic spaces and laundry chutes allow indoor air to escape through the cavities, gaps and cracks around these classic features. Sealing off open cavities around those features often requires plywood, rigid foam or drywall fastened into place and then caulked around the edges.

Keep an eye out for framing features that cause drafts. Balloon framing is a type of construction where wall studs run all the way from the foundation to the roof, allowing air to flow freely through those spaces. Second floors with knee wall attics on both sides are notorious for air leakage. Open cavities allow air to flow horizontally between the attic spaces, making the home uncomfortable and inefficient. Seal off the open cavities in the floor framing and insulate attic spaces.

Dense-packed cellulose or closed cell foam insulation can be sprayed into exterior walls. Skilled contractors can remove pieces of siding and drill holes to fill the wall cavities from the outside of the home.

For brick or stone homes, holes can be drilled from the inside and then patched and painted. Insulating walls from the inside of the home requires more time and effort in preparation and cleanup, but having well-insulated walls is worth it.

Knob and tube wiring – commonly used from the early 1880s to the 1930s with no grounding wire – should be replaced prior to insulating walls and attics for safety purposes. Contact between insulation and knob and tube wiring can create a fire hazard.

People often think new windows are the best way to improve a home's efficiency. Considering the cost of replacing windows, I recommend investing in air sealing and insulation first. Then consider storm windows to keep the charm of the original windows, such as leaded glass and stained-glass windows in good condition. Choose from interior or exterior options that are operable and inoperable.

Once you've addressed the envelope of your home, consider appliance improvements. Replace your old electric water heater with a heat pump water heater. This upgrade can save a family of four an estimated \$550 per year and more than \$5,600 over the lifetime of the water heater, according to ENERGY STAR®.

Invest in high-efficiency heating and cooling equipment. A mini-split heat pump, also known as a ductless heat pump, is a more efficient option than electric baseboard heating and provides the benefit of air conditioning.

Older homes don't have to be inefficient. Show your home some love and invest in energy efficient upgrades.



YOU GOTTA HAVE A FIDDLE IN THE BAND

Keeping Old-Time Music Alive One Jam at a Time

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdea.coop

"If you're gonna play in Texas, you gotta have a fiddle in the band," the classic Alabama song goes — and South Dakota is no exception. The Fiddlers of South Dakota, a group of traveling fiddle enthusiasts and musicians, carry that spirit, bringing the joys of acoustic music and an old-time charm to parades, festivals and hometown celebrations across the state through the summer months.

One of these traveling musicians, Ken Nelson of South Shore who joined the group in 2010, describes the group as a "loose-knit group of people who like to get together and jam." In total, the group has more than 30 members from eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. And it's not just fiddlers — the ensemble includes other acoustic instruments, including mandolin, bass, banjo and harmonica.

According to Nelson, the group's repertoire draws from old-time traditions — breakdowns, waltzes, reels and jigs — the kind of music once played on porches, at barn dances and around campfires.

"You could call it old-time music," Nelson said. "It's not really bluegrass or folk music. It's hard to describe it until you hear it."

Whether the song is an Irish jig or a Croatian polka, Nelson said the music never fails to connect with the audience.

Nelson said that connection is what drives these musicians to travel hundreds of miles to gigs across the state — from Fort Sisseton's Historic Festival to the Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant in De Smet, to Prairie Village's Annual Steam Threshing Jamboree in Madison. It's not a living, he said, but more of a passion — a way to stay connected to music, to community, and to his fellow fiddlers.

"We play everywhere we can," he said. "And everybody enjoys it. We usually only make enough money to pay for the gas but that's all we really care about."

"Once We played for Potato Days over in Clark," Nelson laughed. "We were set up right next to the potato wrestling pit. We had to make sure we were sitting far enough back so that when mashed potato started flying, we didn't get splashed."

The Fiddlers of South Dakota expect to perform next at the Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant in De Smet in July. Nelson said the public is not only welcome to attend the show, but acoustic string players of all ages are encouraged to join the organization's jam sessions and informal performances such as at Luce Cabin at Lake Herman State Park or after their performance in Fort Sisseton.

"We're always trying to incorporate new players into the group," he said. "Sometimes young students come and play with us, and they're always welcome. It's fun and humbling to have young players, sometimes as young as 10 or 11, join in, because, if you don't include the young people, it's not going to last."

The Fiddlers of South Dakota
playing old-time tunes at
Newton Hills State Park.
Photo submitted by Ken Nelson



SOUTH DAKOTA STAR QUILTS

Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative directors present retiring manager Melissa Maher (left) with a star quilt.
Photo by JJ Martin

Honoring Cooperative Legacy With Time-honored Tradition

Frank Turner

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Across the prairie, few gifts carry as much meaning as a star quilt. For many, these quilts are more than just blankets – they are acts of honor. Rooted in Native American culture, particularly among Lakota, Dakota and other tribes of South Dakota, star quilts have long been used to mark some of life’s largest milestones, including graduations, marriages, memorials and moments of deep community respect.

Electric cooperative leaders Donovan Young Man, a former director of Lacreek Electric who was honored shortly before his passing earlier this year, and Melissa Maher, the former manager of Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, recently accepted star quilts from their cooperatives in recognition of their many years of service to their member-owners.

So what makes the star quilt such an honor? According to International Quilt Museum Collections Manager Jamie Swartz, the quilts are special because they take an incredible amount of skill and experience to assemble.

Many star quilts are block quilts, constructed from dozens or even hundreds of small fabric pieces carefully cut and stitched together. At the heart of the design is an eight-pointed star, a

shape that demands near-perfect precision.

“There are so many small pieces that make up a star quilt,” Swartz said. “When you are combining so many small pieces together to make a large, over-all design, there is more room for error. A small mismeasurement can create bumps, ripples or puckers in the patchwork.”



Photo Courtesy of the International Quilt Museum, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1997.007.0123

That level of precision, care and time-honored tradition a star quilt represents is a part of what makes it such a meaningful gift. In recent years, the practice of gifting star quilts has been embraced by some electric cooperatives as a way to express a deep appreciation for their employees who have dedicated a lifetime of work to their cooperatives and communities.

Remembering Donovan Young Man

Before his passing earlier this year, Donovan Young Man was honored by his cooperative at the Lacreek Electric annual meeting with a star quilt for his 31 years of service to Lacreek Electric, serving as a director for both his cooperative and the South Dakota Rural Electric Association. Specifically, the cooperative honored Donovan's commitment to both his cooperative and community.

Lacreek Electric CEO Josh Fanning said Young Man was known for both his calm and steady presence, and his exceptional ability to bridge tribal relations, fostering understanding and unity within the community.

In his community, Donovan was known for his profound impact on his community's youth. For 41 years, he devoted himself to the Oglala Lakota County School District, leaving a lasting legacy of dedication, education, and empowerment for the youth. Beyond education, Donovan served his community in many other ways, including as a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council.

"Donovan had a lasting impact on our cooperative," Fanning said. "His wisdom, leadership, and steady guidance helped shape its direction and strengthen its foundation. His contributions will be remembered and felt for years to come."

"We chose a star quilt because gifting one is a deeply meaningful gesture in our area – an expression of profound respect, honor and the warmth of community," Fanning continued. "In many Indigenous cultures, the star quilt represents the highest form of recognition, symbolizing heartfelt gratitude for the recipient's enduring contributions. It also serves as a guiding light, reflecting the inspiration and direction they provide for future generations."

Honoring Melissa Maher

Moreau-Grand Electric honored Melissa Maher with a star quilt at the co-ops annual meeting in October for her 40 years of service at the cooperative. In addition to Maher, the cooperative also presented Larry Hieb with a quilt for his 55 combined years of service as both an employee and director.

Maher joined the cooperative in 1984 as manager's secretary. Through the years, Maher remained with the cooperative, serving as the member service director and later Moreau-Grand Electric's manager, the first woman to hold this title.

"I've always loved star quilts, what they stand for – the celebration and honoring of someone with an heirloom that they can enjoy for hopefully generations to come," she said.

Maher first experienced the star quilt tradition through her



Lacreek Electric employees gift director Donovan Young Man a star quilt to celebrate his 31 years of service to the electric cooperative.

Photos by Mandy Scherer



mother, who taught kindergarten at Cheyenne-Eagle Butte School. As a teacher in the Eagle Butte community, her mother received star quilts from several of her students' families.

Seeing the joy it brought her mother, Maher continued the star quilt tradition into her years at the cooperative, gifting quilts to retirees of the cooperative, gifting dozens of star quilts made by quilt maker Bonnie LeBeaux to employees of the co-op, honoring retirements, directors, and even key members of the construction crew that helped build the new Moreau-Grand Electric office.

"It's hard to guess how many star quilts I have gifted over the years," Maher said. "Probably dozens if I had to guess."

The tradition came full circle at her retirement party when Moreau-Grand Electric presented Mellisa a star quilt of her own.

"We wanted to honor her 40 years of service and highlight abilities as a manager," said Paul Lawrence, a director of Moreau-Grand Electric. "It's a way of conveying that she led with honor and integrity, and she did exactly that."



Registration is now open for members interested in learning more about where some of your electricity is generated! This one-day bus tour to Dry Fork Station in Gillette, Wyoming, includes guided facility tours, entertainment, and meal. The best part is, it's completely FREE!

To ensure as many members as possible have the opportunity to attend, priority will be given to those who have not participated in the tour before.

If you're interested, please complete the form below and return it to: **BHEC | PO Box 792 | Custer, SD 57730**

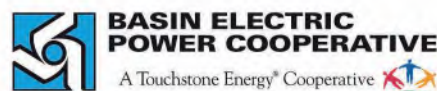
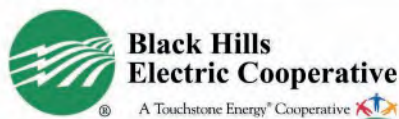
Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____



AG APPRECIATION AT THE CENTRAL STATES FAIR



We invite you to the 3rd Annual Ag Appreciation event held **August 18th, from 5:00pm - 6:30pm, at the Monument Health Stage** inside the fairgrounds! These outstanding individuals and business have made lasting contributions to their communities and the agriculture industry, and this is our chance to say 'thank you' for their unwavering commitment.

A complimentary meal will be served from 5pm - 6pm, with a short program to follow. Enjoy **FREE fair entrance*** and be entered into a drawing to receive one of two, two-pack **PREMIER** passes to an event at the fair.

***Must enter on LaCrosse Street and present ticket at the gate entrance for free fair entrance.**

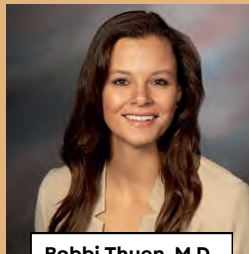
2025 RURAL NEIGHBOR NOMINEES

2025 Agribusiness Award
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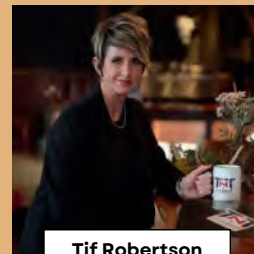
Marty Hansen

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2025 Rural Health Care Neighbor Award
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Tif Robertson

2025 Rural Neighbor Award
Sponsored by:





Cam Wal Electric member Tami Schanzenbach with her dogs Mac, Cash and Blu. *Submitted Photo.*

RESCUING ANIMALS

Co-op Members Foster and Support Pets In Need

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Tami Schanzenbach has always wanted to help animals.

From her earliest days in Aberdeen where she worked as a veterinary technician and helped start the Aberdeen Area Humane Society, to her later Pets N Stuff store in Mobridge, Tami's focus has always been on humans' furry companions and getting them into loving homes.

And even after a long career and a so-called retirement, she still finds ways to help. Through the Wamakaskan Onisca Humane Society, she opens her home to animals in need.

"I'm a foster failure," Tami laughed, admitting three of her own beloved pet dogs were originally supposed to be adopted out.

Served by Cam Wal Electric, Tami's home near Selby is the halfway point for countless animals on their journey from neglect, abuse and homelessness to their forever homes.

"If I have a person that calls me, if someone has found a dog, I ask initially

if they're able to help me with taking care of that dog for a little bit until we can determine whether it belongs to somebody," she explained.

The pets will go to a foster home for the time being — Tami credits volunteers like her friend Annie Walker, a member of Moreau-Grand Electric from the McIntosh area, for stepping up and opening her home to foster animals.

"One day, Tami had a picture of a litter of puppies that needed to be bottle fed," Walker said about her first fostering experience.

"I figured it would be something myself and my children would be up to, and ever since then, I keep taking some animals from time to time."

If the dog isn't claimed, the rehoming process begins, starting with veterinary care.

"We go through and we vaccinate and treat the animal and do what's needed to be able to make that puppy or dog available for adoption," Tami continued.

Sadly, the circumstances in which she receives them usually aren't pleasant.

The pets come from around Selby, many from the Standing Rock and Cheyenne River reservations, where they're often found abandoned. Tami recalls coming upon shocking discoveries, like "bait dogs" used to train fighting dogs in the Bismarck area.

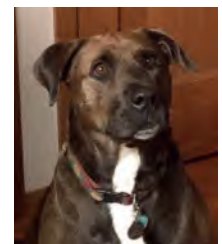
"People will steal puppies and kitties and train their pitbulls for fights, and they have a dog that's called a bait dog," she explained. "And that you see in our area as well ... days where [multiple] people are missing their dogs. People are coming in and stealing them and using them as bait dogs."

That's what Tami suspects happened to Cash, a 7-year-old pitbull/lab cross found "in the middle of nowhere" covered in pellet shots and bite marks.

"It took a long time for him to trust and know he's going to be okay here," Tami said. "And I don't



Annie Walker with rescue, Layla. *Submitted Photo.*



Cash, who was used as a "bait dog," was adopted by Tami. *Submitted Photo*

blame him, because he's never been taken care of.

Tami has made it her mission to end the cycle of animal neglect and abuse where she's able by sterilizing the pets coming into her care before they're adopted out. She also sponsors sterilizations for other peoples' pets.

"We just had about 12 dogs that we sponsored to be spayed at the local vet," she said. "We had a lady that helped me with a donation and wanted it geared toward people that couldn't afford to have their animals spayed and neutered ... We have so many people that always have two litters per year."

Stopping the cycle also means barriers to adoption – if someone isn't a good fit, there's a chance that animal will be surrendered back to the rescue and the process will start from the beginning.

Tami conducts interviews with potential pet owners with hopes of finding a perfect match.

She added that she sometimes steers people with busy and demanding schedules away from getting dogs. A cat – famously independent – is often a better fit, she said.

Tami also employs sustainable adoption practices she says make for better-behaved dogs – eight weeks is generally the earliest age when she'll allow adoptions to occur.

"We have puppy socialization that occurs" when the puppies are little, she explained. "They wrestle and play with their siblings, and they create a lot of socialization that way. And there's a lot of research that has proven that if you keep them with their siblings during that period of time, they make a heck of a lot better dog going forth, because they've been through that socialization."

Jen Uecker, Board President of the Pierre/Fort Pierre Area Humane Society, also known as Paws Animal Rescue, says without volunteers like Tami and Annie, shelters like hers would be overrun and rescuing animals from abandonment wouldn't be possible.

"We rely heavily on volunteers to help ease the burden of our limited staff and resources," Uecker said. "The foster volunteers open their home to these animals not really knowing a whole lot

about them, their demeanor, where they came from, or anything, and they open their homes to help them feel comfortable and confident until they're ready for their new forever family."

Tami encourages people to volunteer, support their local rescues, adopt if they're able and above all, love their pets.

"There are a lot of dogs and cats and it's just not their fault – they get the bad end of things," Walker said. "Tami is super dedicated ... She's always willing to step in and help these animals find a better life."

For Tami, it all comes down to giving that love back.

"They provide unconditional love to humans, and sometimes we forget that," she said. "We work all day ... When you come home, you need to spend some time with your pets."

HUMANE SOCIETY & SANCTUARY DIRECTORY

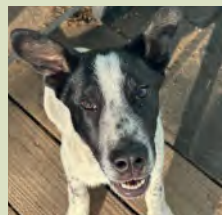
Wamakaskan Onsica (Mobridge).....	(605) 850-8430
Paws Animal Rescue (Pierre).....	(605) 223-2287
Sioux Falls Area Humane Society.....	(605) 338-4441
Humane Society of the Black Hills (Rapid City)....	(605) 394-4170
Battle Mountain Humane Society (Hot Springs)....	(605) 745-7283
Beadle County Humane Society (Huron).....	(605) 352-8955
Aberdeen Area Humane Society.....	(605) 226-1200
Glacial Lakes Humane Society (Watertown).....	(605) 882-2247
Brookings Regional Humane Society.....	(605) 697-7387
Western Hills Humane Society (Spearfish).....	(605) 642-1576
Heartland Humane Society (Yankton).....	(605) 664-4244
Siouxland Humane Society (Sioux City).....	(712) 252-2614
Mitchell Animal Rescue.....	(605) 770-2170
Oglala Pet Project (Kyle).....	(605) 455-1518
Wakpá Wašté Animal Shelter (Eagle Butte).....	(605) 964-7387
Fur and Purr Cat Shelter (Milbank).....	(605) 432-4505
Lake Traverse Animal Rescue (Sisseton).....	(605) 742-0219

Tami says her most rewarding rescue was Fez, an 8-week-old shepherd/collie cross found with mange, a skin disease caused by mites. She said she refused to give on Fez, who is now a healthy dog with a full coat of hair.
Submitted Photo.

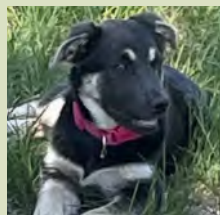


Looking for a new home...

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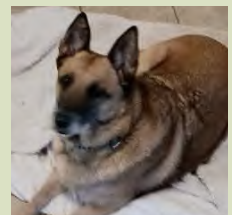
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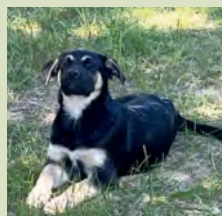
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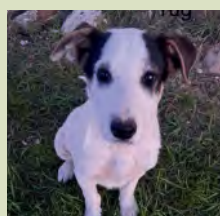
Chopper



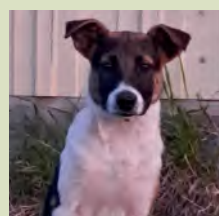
Eliza



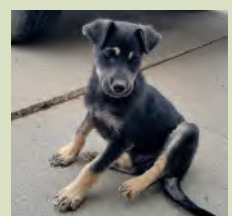
Agnes



Tug



Scooter



Leo



Central Electric Cooperative's distribution lines power members' farms and ranches throughout much of Central South Dakota.
Photo by Jacob Boyko

REMEMBERING WHEN THE LIGHTS CAME ON

Central South Dakota Rancher Looks Back to Days Before Power

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Near Big Bend Dam in central South Dakota, farmer and rancher Clayton Knippling works the same land his father and grandfather had decades before.

The work he and his wife, Evelyn, and two sons do on the sprawling acre family ranch looks very different than it did back then, though. That's because today the ranch has electricity.

Back in the 1940s and early 1950s,

having electricity was a luxury enjoyed almost exclusively by people in towns and cities, or rural folks who happened to live along major highways. With their homestead several miles northeast of Fort Thompson, the Knippings understood their odds of getting connected to a utility were slim for the time being. Their lives were powered by an old diesel generator out in the barn – enough to keep the kitchen refrigerator humming and a couple of light bulbs lit.

“I remember being told, ‘Shut that

refrigerator door! You're wasting cold air!’” Knippling laughed, thinking back to that overworked generator.

But as soon as the electric cooperative crews visited the ranch, that generator was permanently retired and would never run again.

Knippling thought back to that day in the early 1950s when he was about six years old. He remembers watching the trench-diggers from Tri-County Electric – merged into Central Electric in 2000 – trench their way to each outbuilding. Hours later, he would see those buildings shining bright in the darkness for the first time ever.

Having electricity didn't change the work out in the fields. Knippling said a lot of the work is the same in 2025 as it was in 1955. But back at the homestead, Tri-County Electric brought the Knippling ranch into the

20th century.

“We even had a welder after that,” Knippling recalled. “That took 220 volts, and I don’t think our old generator was putting off that. We could then fix our own iron.”

Electricity was a game-changer for the Knippings’ water needs. Seizing the opportunity, they dug a new, deeper well with an electric pump for better quality water and ran lines out to each building.

“[Before we had electricity] there was a stool and a nail where a tin cup sat, and there was a bucket of water and everybody that came through would drink out of that cup, so if somebody got a cold, we all got it,” Knippling laughed.

“Electricity allowed us to put in a pressure tank and then run the water lines to every house so we weren’t carrying a bucket anymore.”

The ranch also transitioned to all-electric pivot irrigation and pumps along the Missouri River. Today, Knippling Land and Cattle

irrigates 1,300 acres of farm land – an unimaginable figure before there was co-op power.

In the winter, the new electric block heaters for the diesel engines ensured there was always at least one tractor that would start up.

Life was just a little bit brighter, warmer and simpler with co-op power.

An advocate for rural life and progression, Clayton has also served the last 42 years on the board of directors for Midstate Communications, the local member-owned telecom cooperative, in an effort to equalize the disparities between urban and rural life.

“It changed the world back in the ‘50s when electricity came,” Clayton said. “A lot of kids left the farm because it was too rural. If you came from a farm, you didn’t want to come back. After electricity came, it became easier for younger people to stay on the farm.”



Clayton Knippling farms and raises cattle southeast of Fort Thompson on the same ranchland where he grew up, just 15 miles from his childhood home where Tri-County Electric first hooked up their power in the early 1950s.

Photo by Jacob Boyko



Pivot irrigation systems, like the one shown here along S.D. Highway 50 southeast of Fort Thompson, use electricity to rotate on a center pivot. Use of the systems can increase yields while reducing wasted water.

Photo by Jacob Boyko

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Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number: _____

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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.

JUNE 29

1880 Train Old West Shootout
5 p.m.
Hill City, SD

JULY 1

Deadwood Trolley on the Trail
Deadwood, SD

JULY 4-7

Star-Spangled Independence Holiday Celebration
Main Street
Hill City, SD

JULY 4-7

Star-Spangled Parade
10 a.m.
Main Street
Hill City, SD

JULY 4

Pancake Breakfast
8-10 a.m.
Hot Dog Lunch
11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Hill City Center
Hill City, SD

JULY 11-12

Senior Rummage Sale
Hill City Center
Hill City, SD

JULY 12

39th Annual Spearfish Canyon Half Marathon & 5K
7 a.m.
Spearfish, SD
605-722-4558

JULY 12

Rochford Day
Rochford Volunteer Fire Department
Rochford, SD

JULY 13

The Black Hills Raptor Center The Farmer's Daughter Antique Shop Meet & Greet
10 a.m.-3 p.m.
164 Main St.
Hill City, SD

JULY 18-20

Badlands Astro Fest
Badlands, SD

JULY 19

Boyd's Antique Summer Flea Market
Custer, SD

JULY 20-26

Days of '76 Rodeo & Parade
Parade: Fri., Sat. at 1:30 p.m.
Deadwood, SD

JULY 26

Flower Show
Hill City Center
Hill City, SD

JULY 30-AUG. 3

Fall River County Fair
Edgemont, SD

JULY 31

Hill City Senior Citizens Biker Breakfast
7:30-11 a.m.
Hill City Center
Hill City, SD

AUG. 7-10

Custer County Fair
Custer County Fairgrounds
Hermosa, SD

AUG. 16

75th Annual Black Hills Super 6 Mountain Bike Race
8 a.m.
3-hour, 3-mile course,
6-hour, 6-mile loop
Spearfish, SD
www.NHCASA.com

AUG. 31

Studebaker & Packard Car & Truck Show
10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Custer, SD
605-431-4502

Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.