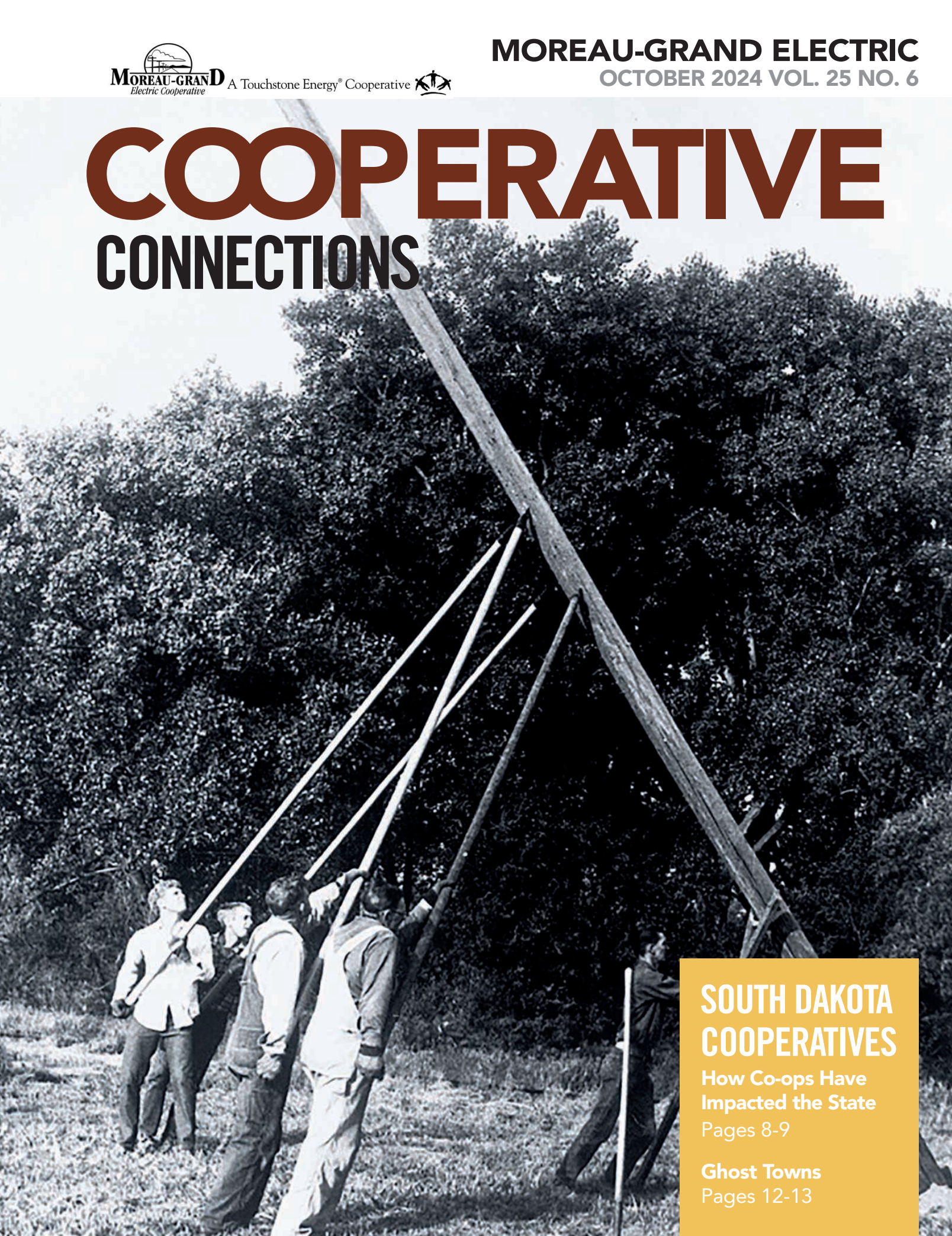


COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



SOUTH DAKOTA COOPERATIVES

**How Co-ops Have
Impacted the State**
Pages 8-9

Ghost Towns
Pages 12-13

August 2024 Board Minutes and June 2024 Financial Information

The Aug. 27, 2024, board of directors’ meeting was held at the Timber Lake office with the following directors present: Bartlett, Clark, Hahne, Hieb, Keckler, Lawrence, Maher, McLellan, Walker and Wall, and others present: Manager Maher, Operations Superintendent Larson and Finance Officer Lemburg (Delegated Recorder of Minutes).

The Large Power Users monthly report was given by Stephanie Bartlett, which included large power usage and payments.

The Member Services Report was given by JJ Martin, which included KFYR TV’s video coverage of President Maher’s grocery store in Isabel, ice cream socials, Rushmore Electric communication work continues in the new headquarter facility, JJ and Assistant Operations Superintendent Josh Lemburg will work at the SD State Fair on behalf of SDREA, director scholarship requirements, “The Power is Yours” will be the theme of the 2024 annual meeting, and annual meeting giveaway item ideas.

The Operations Report was given by Kent Larson, which included moving more items from the old building to the new headquarter facility, auctioning old Truck 15, a new digger truck will be arriving in September, Caterpillar maintenance agreement for the new generator, SDREA safety training, Timber Lake Airport line project update, and Director Bartlett relayed concerns from members about a pole leaning in the Glad Valley area, in which this will be repaired when the water recedes.

Manager Maher gave the Manager’s Report, which included the approval of MGEC withdrawing its application for Grip Grant 1, first solar interconnection is active, electric vehicle charging station installation inquiries, CRST Long-Term Recovery Group meeting, new headquarter facility heating and cooling update, attending a Community Economic Forum in Eagle Butte, implementing a power cost adjustment due to the 2025 Basin Electric and WAPA rate increases, Basin Electric member survey, Rushmore Electric Managers’ meeting report and Cooperative Family Fund Annual Report.

The Mid-West annual meeting will be held December 10-12, 2024, in Denver. Director Lawrence expressed interest in attending. Directors will review their schedules, and this will be revisited at the September board meeting.

Manager Maher and Operations Superintendent Larson gave the Basin Electric Managers’ meeting report, which included a financial update, load growth, DGC update, energy markets, and a political and legislative outlook.

The directors gave the Basin Electric annual meeting report, which included significant load growth, an interesting keynote presentation and potential clean energy changes.

Director McLellan, Manager Maher and Operations Superintendent Larson gave the Rushmore Electric Board meeting report, which included 2025 preliminary budget, Basin Electric update, increasing the engineering rates, and Federated Insurance update.

Directors Bartlett and Keckler gave the SDREA Board Leadership Summit report, which included the importance of being cooperative minded, helping new directors feel comfortable in their new role, supporting their manager, set goals for the future, keep infrastructure up to date, the importance of board member education, and the importance of getting young people involved on the board. PO BOX 1546, Eagle Butte, SD 57625

During the roundtable discussion, Director McLellan proposed all directors start utilizing the Call to Order application for board books, purchase iPads for the directors to use and budget for these changes in 2025.

Board approved the following: the agenda, the minutes from the July meeting, new members, refunds, line extensions, financial statistics, disbursements, annual meeting meal bid from Red Earth Table, LLC, annual meeting giveaway item, director scholarship requirements, annual donations to the area fire departments, safety report, director petitions for Districts 1, 3 and 4, 2025 update to the 2023 Load Forecast, President Maher as voting delegate for the CFC director election and vote by mail ballot, SD Department of Tribal Relations donation, and 2025 NRECA insurance and RS plan rates.

The next board meeting was scheduled for Sept. 24, 2024, at 8:30 a.m., in the Timber Lake office.

LOCATE YOUR ACCOUNT ADDRESS



If you locate your address on any of the inside pages of the Moreau-Grand Electric’s *Cooperative Connections*, notify us and you will receive a \$25 bill credit. “Eligible addresses will not be on the front or back cover.”

JUNE 2024 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

	JUNE '24	JUNE '23	YTD 2024
Operating Revenues	\$957,573	\$956,242	\$6,746,995
Cost Of Power	\$481,730	\$502,308	\$3,348,722
Cost Of Electric Service	\$1,021,309	\$981,917	\$6,825,101
Margins	\$(53,833)	\$(9,224)	\$7,698
Kwh Purchased	7,008,803	7,555,463	56,404,868
Kwh Sold	6,031,227	6,923,236	52,233,847

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

MOREAU-GRAND ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 018-951)

Manager: Melissa Maher

Editor: JJ Martin, Member Services and IT Director

Directors

- Ryan Maher, President
- Kerry McLellan, Vice President
- Geralyn Hahne, Secretary-Treasurer
- Lois Bartlett
- Clint Clark
- Larry Hieb
- Bob Keckler
- Paul Lawrence
- Royce Walker
- Troy Wall

Attorney: John Burke

Management Staff:

- Kent Larson, Operations Superintendent
- Josh Lemburg, Assistant Operations Superintendent
- Kyrie Lemburg, Finance Officer
- Jamie Jones, Accountant

MOREAU-GRAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, PO Box 8, 405 Ninth St., Timber Lake, SD 57656-0008, for the members of electric cooperatives across South Dakota. Families subscribe to Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better rural living.

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Design assistance by SDREA

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting for the membership of Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, Inc., will be held at the new MGE Headquarters Building in Timber Lake, S.D., on Wednesday, October 9, 2024 with a plated roast beef dinner beginning at 5:00 p.m. (MT), with the meeting to follow the meal. Note: Membership registration will be open at 5:00 p.m. and will close 15 minutes after the start of the meeting. The meeting will be for the following purposes:

1. Reports on business for the previous fiscal year and transacting such other business as may come before the meeting.
2. For the purpose of electing directors in Districts 1, 3, and 4. If you are disabled and require a special accommodation to have full and equal participation in this Annual Meeting, call 1-800-952-3158.

Geralyn Hahne, Secretary-Treasurer, Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, Inc.
PO Box 8, Timber Lake, SD 57656-0008

MOREAU-GRAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

CERTIFICATE OF DELEGATION

Sample Certificate of Delegation

This form is to designate the voting delegate of an organization. This form should be completed and signed by officers of the organization and brought to the meeting.

Voting Authorization Necessary for Organizations

Non- Individual members such as schools, municipalities, churches, organizations, and corporations are entitled to representation and one vote, but the proper procedure must be followed to exercise this right.

Each member organization should designate a representative who is an officer, shareholder, or member of their organization. This form must be signed by an officer of the governing body.

Authorization to Vote

I, _____, do hereby certify that I am a(n) Officer, Shareholder, or Member (CIRCLE ONE) of said organization and the duly authorized delegate to the Annual Meeting of Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, Inc., to be held on October 9, 2024, in Timber Lake, South Dakota. I request the right to exercise the authority of the membership vested in the:

NAME OF ORGANIZATION

SIGNATURE OF DELEGATE

We, the undersigned, do hereby certify that we comprise the governing body of the above referred organization and that the above referred person is the sole, duly authorized delegate to the Annual Meeting of MOREAU-GRAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

(TWO OR MORE SIGNATURES ARE REQUIRED)

DATE _____

Actual Certificate of Delegation's are available at Moreau-Grand Offices in Timber Lake or Eagle Butte & by calling 1-800-952-3158

FIRE SAFETY

Cooking and heating are the leading causes of home fires and fire injuries, and winter months are the peak time for fire-related deaths. **Fire Prevention Week (Oct. 6-12, 2024)** is the perfect time to review and practice fire safety.

Minimize Your Risks

The good news: Deaths from home fires in the U.S. have trended downward since the 1970s, according to Injury Facts, but even one death from a preventable fire is too many. While fire doesn't discriminate by age, it is the third leading cause of death for children 1 to 14.

When cooking, make fire safety a priority by keeping these tips in mind:

- Be alert; if you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol, don't use the oven or stovetop.
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, boiling or broiling food.
- Keep anything that can catch fire away from your stovetop.

Heating is the second leading cause of home fires. Follow these tips:

- Keep all flammables, like paper, clothing, bedding, drapes or rugs, at least three feet from a space heater, stove or fireplace.
- Never leave portable heaters and fireplaces unattended; turn off heaters and make sure fireplace embers are extinguished before leaving the room.
- If you must use a space heater, place it on a level, nonflammable surface, like ceramic tile, not on a rug or carpet.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- When buying a space heater, look for models that shut off automatically if the heater falls over.

Working Smoke Alarms Are a Must

About three out of five fire deaths happen in homes without working smoke alarms. Smoke alarms are a key part of a home fire escape plan providing early warning to reduce your risk of dying in a fire. The National Fire Protection Association recommends you:

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas on the ceiling or high on the wall.
- Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen, at least 10 feet from the stove, to reduce false alarms.
- Use special alarms with strobe lights and bed shakers for

- people who are hard of hearing or deaf.
- Test smoke alarms monthly.
- Replace batteries in your smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector annually.
- Replace smoke alarms that are 10 or more years old.

When and How to Use a Fire Extinguisher

Always put your safety first; if you are not confident in your ability to use a fire extinguisher, get out and call 9-1-1. The American Red Cross cautions you to evaluate the situation and ensure:

- Everyone has left or is leaving the home
- The fire department has been called
- The fire is small, not spreading, and there is not much smoke
- Your back is to an exit you can use quickly

Remember the acronym PASS:

- P**ull the pin.
- A**im low at the base of the fire.
- S**queeze the handle slowly.
- S**weep the nozzle side to side.

Source: National Safety Council



Power Line Safety "Watch Out for Power Lines!"

Archer Rindels, Age 7

Archer Rindels warns readers to be careful around power lines. Thank you for your picture, Archer! Archer's parents are Kyle and Rochelle Rindels, members of Sioux Valley Energy.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.

Delicious CHICKEN

CHEESY CHICKEN BUNDLES

Ingredients:

- 1 (11 oz.) can condensed cream of chicken soup
- 1/2 cup milk
- 3/4 cup Velveeta, shredded or cubed
- 1 (10 oz.) can chunk chicken, drained and flaked
- 1 (8 oz.) can crescent rolls

Method

Combine soup, milk and cheese. Heat until melted and smooth. Pour into a 7x11 inch pan that has been sprayed with vegetable oil.

Separate crescents into 8 triangles. Place 2 tbsps. of chicken on wide end of crescent roll. Pinch to seal. Place on top of sauce.

Bake uncovered at 375 degrees for 25 minutes and until golden brown. Serve with sauce on top.

Yields eight chicken bundles or four servings.

Janet Ochsner
Box Elder, S.D.

CROCKPOT CHICKEN PARMESAN SOUP

Ingredients:

- 3 boneless chicken breasts
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 can crushed tomatoes (28 oz. can)
- 1 can tomato sauce (15 oz. can)
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground black pepper
- 2 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup parmesan cheese (freshly shaved)
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 8 oz. rotini pasta (uncooked)
- 1 1/2 cup shredded Mozzarella

Method

Add the chicken breast, minced garlic, crushed tomatoes, tomato sauce, salt, pepper, Italian seasoning and chicken broth to the Crock-Pot.

Cover Crock-Pot with lid and cook on low for 6-8 hours.

Shred the chicken. Stir in the shredded parmesan cheese, heavy whipping cream and rotini pasta. Cover and cook on low for 30 minutes.

Top the individual soup servings with mozzarella cheese.

Kayla Beaner
Centerville, S.D.

BUTTER CHICKEN

Ingredients:

- 4 tsps. Garam Masala blend
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp. ground turmeric
- 1/8 tsp. crushed red pepper
- 4 tbsps. butter, divided
- 1 can (14.5 oz.) petite diced tomatoes
- 1 med. red onion, chopped
- 1 1/4 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 tsp. sea salt

Method

Mix Garam Masala, garlic, ginger, turmeric and crushed red pepper in small bowl. Heat large non-stick skillet on medium heat. Toast seasoning mixture 1 min. or just until fragrant, stirring constantly. Add 2 tbsps. of the butter to skillet, swirling to melt. Add onion; cook and stir 2 to 3 mins. until softened. Stir in tomatoes; cook 5 mins. Carefully transfer mixture to blender container; cover. Blend until smooth, scraping sides as needed. Return pureed sauce to skillet. Bring to simmer on med.-low heat. Add chicken; cook 8 to 10 minutes or until chicken is cooked though, stirring occasionally. Stir in remaining butter, cream and salt until well blended. Simmer on med.-low heat 2 to 3 minutes until sauce is slightly thickened. Stir in additional crushed red pepper to taste and serve with hot cooked basmati rice or warm naan bread, if desired. Garnish with fresh cilantro leaves, if desired.

McCormick.com

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 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.



Good Neighbor Award: Shawn and Kathy Olsen

“Neighbor looking out for neighbor”

If something is going on in the town of Dupree, you can bet Shawn and Kathy Olsen are involved. Although they were born and raised in two very different parts of the state, both Shawn and Kathy hold their community with the highest regard.

Church and school serve as anchors for any community, and the Olsens are very active in both. Along with having taught a combined 58 years (so far) in elementary school, when the Dupree UCC Church was in need of a minister, Shawn stepped up to the plate, saying, “If I can stand in front of a classroom full of kids and talk to them,

I guess I can talk to adults for an hour on Sundays.”

Kathy’s grandparents homesteaded across the road from where she and Shawn set their own roots down. Her family is tied to the area, having been active in Dupree since its infancy. Having such deep roots also means that she is related to most of the townsfolk. Fortunately for Kathy, the love of her life is from the other side of the state. Shawn included, “That was always a running joke – that’s why she had to marry me. She is related to everybody else!”

Dupree reminds Shawn of his hometown of Viborg. Well, the people and the sense of community, anyway. The open prairie feels more welcoming to him than the

endless rows of corn in the southeastern part of the state. “It’s neighbor looking out for neighbor,” is how Shawn explains the similarities between Viborg and Dupree.

Their own upbringings certainly shaped the Olsens’ outlook on life and their community. In our towns where family ties, churches, and schools hold us together, we help each other out. “When something happens, people are there and will help you in a heartbeat,” Kathy summed up their value of a rural town. They wanted to raise their children to know that if they can help somebody, they need to help them – simply because it’s the right thing to do. Shawn and Kathy also practice what they preach. “There was a need to be filled. Well, I can do that. If we can do it, we will.”

The Olsens do everything they can for their community, just as they do for their own kids. That’s because they want their community to remain as close-knit and supportive for their kids as it was for them. It takes a lot of work to keep a strong, active, small town alive, and the Olsens do their part. They have taken ownership of their community and stand as role models to us all. For that reason, we honor them as the 2024 Good Neighbors.

Dupree is their home, and they wouldn’t have it any other way. “We bleed purple and gold.”

You are invited!

Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative’s

Open House and

2024 Annual Meeting

- Open House from 3 - 5pm
- Meeting registration and meal start at 5pm
- Business Meeting follows meal
- At New MGE Headquarters Building
- Timber Lake, SD
- Check out the new building
- Business Meeting
- Director Elections
- Roast Beef Dinner Courtesy of Red Earth Table
- Kids’ and Member Prizes

The Power Is Yours

MOREAU-GRAND
Electric Cooperative
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Herman and Nina Rosenau Photo credit: Shannon Marvel

WWII Veteran Remembers How Electricity Modernized Life on the Farm

JJ Martin and Shannon Marvel

For the last 66 years, Herman Rosenau has been thankful he hasn't had to pump water for the cows by hand at his farm and ranch near Glad Valley.

In 1957, Rosenau became one of the first members of Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative in Timber Lake, S.D.

Coming of age at the tail end of World War II, Rosenau bore witness to some major world changes. As rural South Dakota started electrifying, Europe and East Asia were in turmoil. Before shipping off for the war, Rosenau's life was all manual labor. After seeing the metamorphosis that the other half of the world went through, Rosenau watched his own world drastically change. Electricity slowly spread out across the Moreau-Grand service area like lightning in slow motion.

With a mischievous smile, Rosenau

sat down at the kitchen table with his morning coffee to discuss how he remembered the lights coming on at his home. After haying all morning, he was happy for a break.

"Things changed not all overnight, but pretty steady," Rosenau said. "We got an electric refrigerator, then we got electricity out of a pump jack on the well. Everything kept growing little by little."

Before electricity, Rosenau recalls watering the cows with a windmill in the water tank.

"And when the wind didn't blow, you pumped the water by hand," Rosenau said.

He remembers when the first electric bills totaled around \$7 per month.

"Well, story of my life was a pitchfork and a team of horses until around 1947," he said with a laugh.

With electricity becoming available

to rural folks in South Dakota, Rosenau recalled being able to purchase a deep freeze. That electric appliance allowed him to store food, particularly beef, for long periods of time and saved him the 70-mile round-trip to Lemmon to the meat locker.

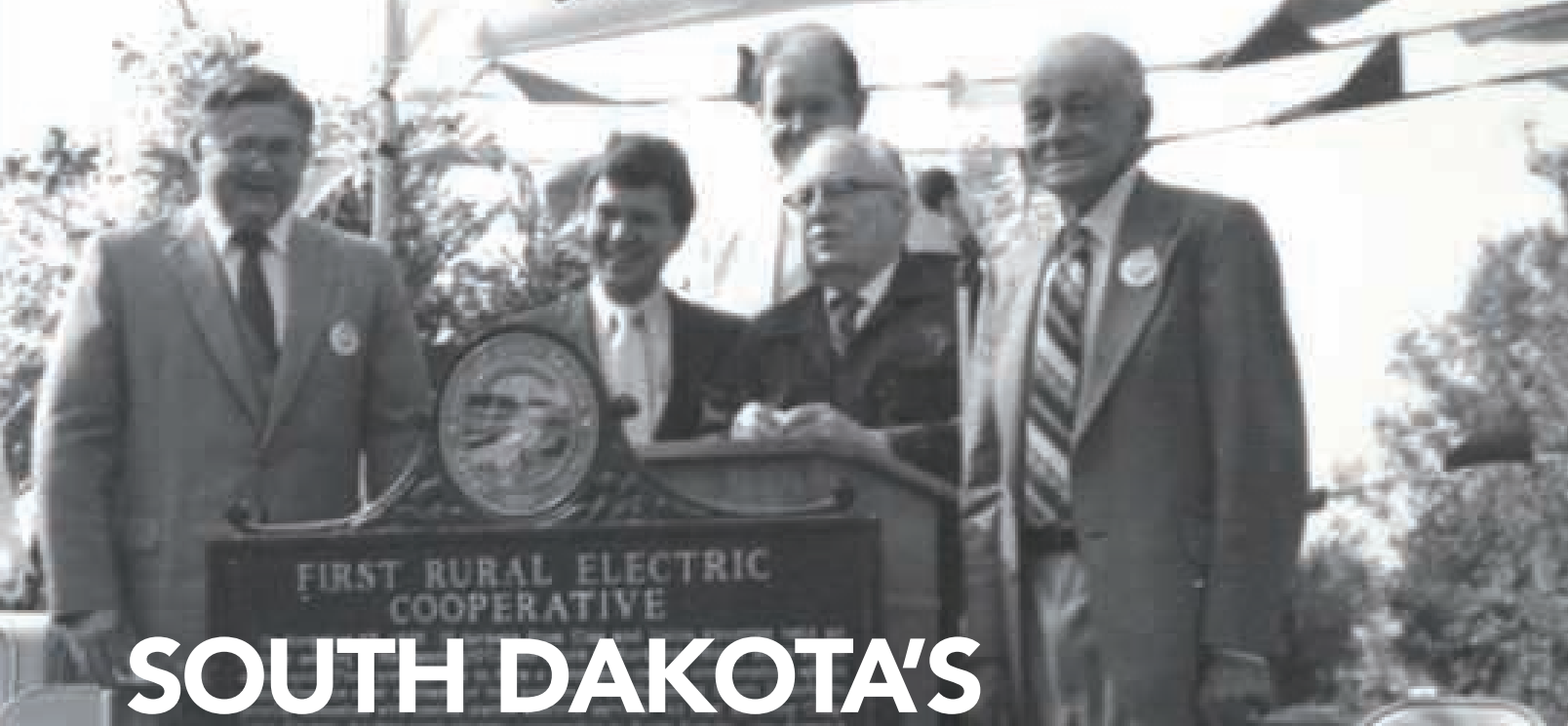
Rosenau is not one to forget how thankful he is for having access to electricity and freedom. The electricity reached his home a few years after he returned home from serving in the Army. The World War II veteran said he went in at the time of the Belgian Bulge.

"I went to the Texas Infantry in the spring when it looked like the war in Europe was getting under control," Rosenau said.

"I was in Manila when they dropped them two little eggs on Japan. And if they hadn't done that, I don't think I'd be here. Because they told us if we have to go ashore in Japan, we will lose a half million to a million boys going ashore. That's the total population of South Dakota."



Linemen placing poles in the early days at Moreau-Grand Electric.



SOUTH DAKOTA'S COOPERATIVES

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Picture life in rural South Dakota 100 years ago. Each morning, families woke before dawn to work by the flicker of kerosene lamps, hand-pumped water to fill a gas-powered wringer-washer, and retrieved breakfast ingredients from a dripping ice box. Looming in the backs of producers' minds were fears that the market would trend downward and they may not be able to cover their debts, or even harvest their fields.

Today, South Dakota's rural farmers and ranchers enjoy virtually all of the accommodations of modern living their suburban counterparts enjoy. Past luxuries like running water, full-time electricity, internet and telephone are now standard, and many farmers enjoy stronger economic security compared to the past's tumultuous markets.

That's because for over 100 years, rural South Dakotans have pooled their resources by forming cooperatives that level out some of the disparities between rural and urban life. Thanks to members' ingenuity, rural America is not just a viable, but a thriving place to live and work.

The First Cooperatives

The first cooperatives in South Dakota were agriculture-focused. Far too often, an

oversupply of goods led to price crashes, resulting in farmers unable to economically harvest crops or market livestock. This led to tremendous waste and crushed livelihoods.

As producers grew weary of the uncertain market, they organized to collectively market and distribute their products: they coordinated, shared risk and pooled resources.

South Dakota's earliest farm supply and marketing cooperatives started popping up a little after the turn of the 20th century. The South Dakota Secretary of State's office lists Lake Andes Farmers Cooperative, formed in 1909, as the oldest ongoing cooperative in the state.

During this early period, cooperatives operated in a legal gray area. Since producers working collectively in a cooperative setting could be viewed as monopolistic or collusive, they were under careful watch by the Federal Trade Commission as well as their larger competitors.

That changed in 1922 with the passage of the Capper-Volstead Act.

"Capper-Volstead allowed producers to come together and market their products and not be in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act," explained Brenda Forman, South Dakota Association of Cooperatives executive director. "[Cooperatives] were not considered to be a monopoly as long as they were a cooperative association formed

Clay-Union Electric Corporation was the first electric cooperative in South Dakota.

by producers, owned by the members, one member gets one vote in cooperative elections, etc."

The presence of ag cooperatives surged in the 1930s as producers looked for stability during the Great Depression, the South Dakota Farmers Union says. With effectiveness proven, the cooperative strategy has stuck around since.

Today, there are 63 farm supply and marketing cooperatives serving over 130 South Dakota communities, Forman said.

Those same visionaries who established the first ag cooperatives identified another need that was not being met. Using the same cooperative model that changed their lives once already, farmers would bring power to the prairie.

Electricity

Before energy infrastructure was widespread, many small towns in South Dakota relied on local power plants. However, with distribution lines only serving the city, living even a mile or two out of town was the difference between flipping a light switch and carrying a lantern.

Despite requests from farmers to run lines to their homes – some of whom even offered to pay installation costs – most municipalities and investor-owned utilities (IOUs) refused because undertaking the effort didn't lead to any meaningful profit.

Even many of the state's elected representatives seemed resigned to the idea

that the future of energy for their farming constituents was tied to on-site generation, like the modest Delco–Light plants that could power a few small appliances and light bulbs. To them, it seemed laughable that there was any feasible way to run lines in a state where the service would average out to a sparse 2.2 customers per mile of line, and for many, that was the end of the conversation.

The narrative changed when President Franklin D. Roosevelt expanded his New Deal programs to modernize rural America, creating the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) to finance ambitious projects.

The profit-minded IOUs were largely uninterested in expanding into sparse territory for mealy returns, and little progress was made toward Roosevelt's vision.

In 1936, once it was apparent IOUs wouldn't be making the foray into rural territories as farmers had hoped they would, Roosevelt signed the Rural Electrification Act. Now, cooperatives could organize and receive REA loans while the IOUs idled.

A group of 17 farmers from Clay and Union counties jumped at the opportunity to finally bring their homes into the modern age. Just months after the REA was established, and at a time when just 5% of South Dakota farms had power, the group hatched out a plan to secure an REA loan for their newly-formed Fairview Rural Electric System, today Clay-Union Electric Corporation.

Going door to door and collecting \$5 sign-ons from neighbors ranging from ecstatic to skeptical, the cooperative finally got the REA's green light and received a \$70,000 loan to build 67 miles of line that would serve about 300 members, according to a 1936 Argus Leader report.

The success of South Dakota's first electric cooperative brought hope to still more than 90% of South Dakota farmers without power. It wasn't long before dozens more newly-formed cooperatives were each going door to door collecting sign-on fees to secure their own REA loans.

Serving Everyone

In 1946, roughly 10 years after the state's first electric cooperative debuted, rural farmers and ranchers from the state's

remote northwest corner met in Lemmon to form their own cooperative. The board understood securing a loan from REA to serve such a vast and sparse territory would be a big ask, so they opted to charge members a \$10 monthly minimum, which was twice the minimum rate of most South Dakota cooperatives, and equal to about \$170 today.

Even so, would-be members agreed to the terms of the longshot project and paid their \$5 membership fee. Despite federal hesitation about the feasibility of such a project, the REA loan was approved.

Grand Electric Cooperative received more than \$1.8 million over two loans that would build 1,127 miles of line and serve 948 members. The investment amounted to one of the REA's largest and riskiest yet in the state, but proved to be a success.

Cooperative members did the impossible; the wires in northwest South Dakota had finally been energized. Board members then eyed another ambitious goal – bringing telephone to Northwest South Dakota.

West River Cooperative Telephone Company was formed as a separate entity, but in the spirit of cooperation, the telephone and electric cooperative would be jointly operated. The two would, and still to this day, share a building, staff and infrastructure.

“Up here, we cover almost 8,000 square miles and have 4,000 miles of wire, but we only have 1,800 members,” explained Eric Kahler, the cooperatives' joint general manager. “When you look at the economics of this type of service territory, if you're in the business to make money, you're not going to be too successful here. The cooperative model is really the only model that could work here.”

And the community knows that fact and is grateful for their cooperative, says Patricia Palmer, who has spent much of her last 63 years working in Grand Electric and West River Telephone's member services.

“They're thankful,” she said. “Very thankful. We have a terrific telephone work crew and line department. At times, they work tirelessly in horrible weather conditions... You can't believe the thank you notes that we get.”

Growing up on a farm near McIntosh, Palmer has a firsthand account of the impact

of cooperatives. And she says it's one she will never forget.

The night she watched her family's farmhouse light up for the first time was also the beginning of a new chapter, she recalled. A chapter with an automatic washer, a refrigerator and a toaster.

As times change, cooperatives continue to be at the forefront of bringing service that might otherwise be out of reach.

“When I came to the cooperative, it was just telephone and electricity, and now we have high-speed internet and TV,” Palmer said. “Over the years, the cooperative has really grown!”

Other Applications

The cooperative model is also used in many other sectors; there are 34 South Dakota credit unions that offer member-owners better interest rates and reduced fees compared to for-profit banks.

Even some rural water systems, while not wholly cooperatives themselves, borrow some of the cooperative fundamentals to make serving large areas more practical.

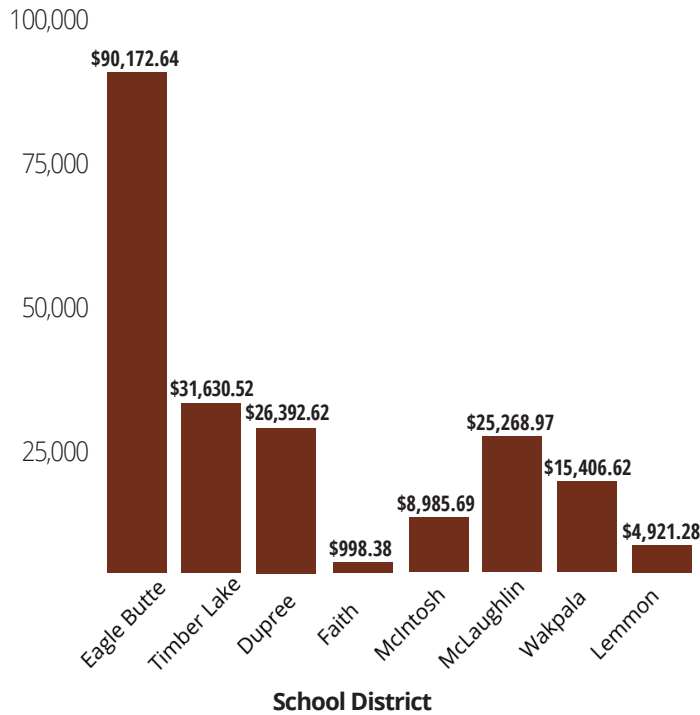
“Cooperatives are pretty significant in the impact they've had,” Forman said. “And the other cooperatives we have – there are daycare co-ops, food co-ops, education co-ops – there's a number of different structures that the cooperative model has been used for, because of that ownership and one member, one vote.”

Today, there are 141 cooperatives in the state, providing more than 78,500 jobs, \$2.8 billion in worker salaries and \$3.9 billion in gross domestic product (GDP), according to a South Dakota State University study titled *The Economic Impact of Cooperatives in South Dakota*.

That means cooperatives contribute almost 13% of South Dakota jobs, more than 11% of salaries, and 6.2% of the state's entire GDP.

“In a cooperative, your board is local,” Forman said. “[The co-op board and employees] support and participate in sports functions, 4-H barbecues, you may go to church with them, or they may be at family dinner. Which means when something is a concern or challenge, you have somebody to go to and you have contacts close that know you and understand the system.”

Cooperative Taxes Benefit Schools



Your electric cooperative pays a generation tax in lieu of real and personal property taxes.

The tax is .016 percent of the kilowatt sales in each school district of Moreau-Grand's service area.

All of this tax amount is allocated directly to the school districts and is used for school purposes.

Total 2023 taxes paid in 2024 were \$203,776.72.

2023 Year End Statistics

Members.....	3,915	Average Residential	
Meters.....	7,156	Usage.....	812 kWh
Service Area.....	6,950 sq mi	Average Residential	
Cost of one mile		Statement.....	\$111.04
single-phase line:		Average Residential	
Underground.....	\$66,100	kWh.....	\$0.13
Overhead.....	\$53,300	Average Commercial	
Cost of one mile		Usage.....	3,585 kWh
three-phase line:		Average Commercial	
Underground.....	\$98,400	Statement.....	\$368.24
Overhead.....	\$88,500	Average Commercial	
Transmission line.....	210 mi	kWh.....	\$0.10
Underground line.....	453 mi	Average Revenue/	
Overhead line.....	3,190 mi	kWh.....	\$0.12

Taxes Paid by Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative in 2023

S.D. Generation Taxes	\$203,776.72
Real and Personal Taxes	\$15,738.86
Sales, Use and Excise Taxes U.S.	\$482,346.67
Unemployment Taxes	\$2,682.32
Employers Share FICA	\$151,115.05
TOTAL TAXES PAID	\$855,659.62

Balance Sheet

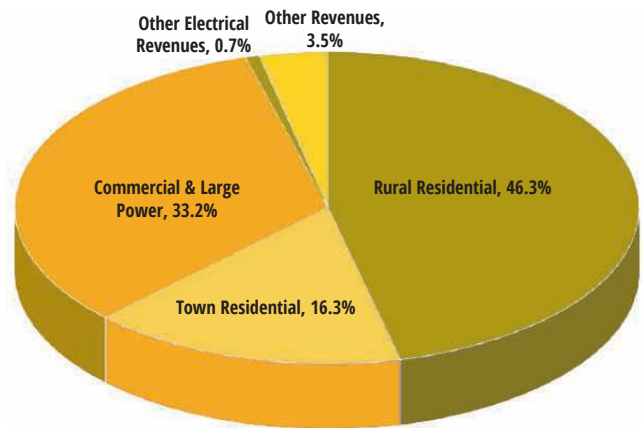
What we own as of Dec. 31, 2022 and Dec. 31, 2023

What We Own	2022	2023
We have an electrical system that costs:	\$59,363,636	\$61,783,686
Plus construction in progress:	3,700,655	6,636,320
Less Depreciation to date:	(23,484,617)	(24,694,960)
Our net plant is:	\$39,579,674	\$43,725,046
IN ADDITION		
Non utility plant:	-	-
We have cash on hand & checking deposits:	319,814	584,250
We have time and savings deposits:	4,156,001	3,045,544
We have owed to us for electricity & other supplies:	1,496,447	1,294,161
We have material on hand:	1,508,354	1,454,542
We have investments in associated organizations:	6,517,389	6,910,965
We have other investments:	287,632	284,531
We have deferred debits:	89,447	136,626
FOR TOTAL ASSETS OF:	\$53,954,758	\$57,435,665
Liabilities		
	2022	2023
We owe RUS, CFC and CoBank:	\$31,561,586	\$33,957,404
We owe power bill, short-term notes, accrued taxes & supplies	2,924,296	2,984,161
We owe consumers & others for deposits:	509,442	523,242
We owe other deferred credits:	201,845	288,905
FOR TOTAL LIABILITIES OF:	\$35,197,169	\$37,753,712
Net Worth		
	2022	2023
We have patronage capital credits:	\$15,263,848	\$16,091,959
We have other equities & donated capital:	3,493,741	3,589,994
FOR A TOTAL NET WORTH OF:	\$18,757,589	\$19,681,953
WE HAVE A TOTAL OF LIABILITIES & NET WORTH OF	\$53,954,758	\$57,435,665
PERCENT EQUITY:	34.77%	34.27%

Statement of Revenue and Expenses

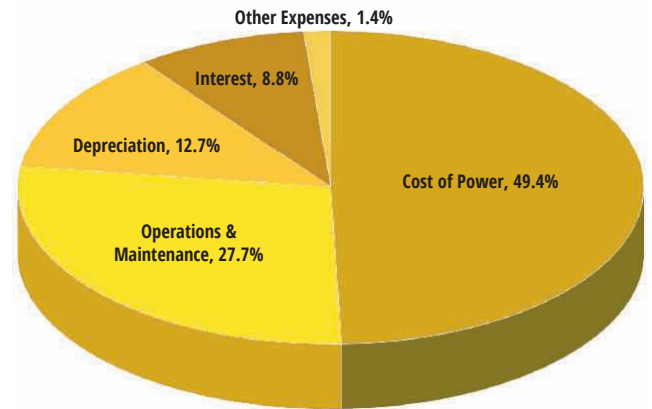
Operating Revenues	2022	2023
Farms	\$6,128,640	\$6,030,700
Residential	2,149,392	2,121,207
Commercial	4,275,029	4,326,117
Street Lights	91,456	92,323
Penalties	68,174	65,884
Miscellaneous Revenues	397,392	395,436
Total Operating Revenue	\$13,110,083	\$13,031,667

Operating Expenses	2022	2023
Purchased Power	\$6,658,238	\$6,276,002
Transmission Expenses	53,102	43,950
Distribution-Operations	912,268	1,103,996
Distribution-Maintenance	766,249	779,193
Consumer Accounting	514,277	482,558
Customer Service and Information	117,649	152,086
Sales Expense	13,594	13,274
General and Administrative	957,594	934,280
Depreciation	1,547,336	1,607,841
Taxes	168,542	164,102
Interest	1,066,696	1,118,726
Other Deductions	15,654	13,123
Total Operating Expenses	\$12,791,199	\$12,689,131



What we have left as of Dec. 31, 2022 and Dec. 31, 2023

Operating Margin	\$318,884	\$342,536
Non-operating Margin	116,967	209,296
G & T Capital Credits	810,473	589,650
Other Capital Credits	100,652	92,063
Net Margins	\$1,346,976	\$1,233,545



Your Cooperative

Incorporated: May 6, 1946
Counties Served: Dewey, Corson and Ziebach
Power Supply: Basin Electric – 85% WAPA – Hydro 15%
Source of Loan Funds: USDA/Rural Utilities Service, CFC and CoBank

WHOLESALE POWER COSTS

2012	\$5,210,090
2013	\$5,943,216
2014	\$6,094,754
2015	\$5,565,165
2016	\$6,197,421
2017	\$6,510,770
2018	\$6,492,208
2019	\$6,366,728
2020	\$6,250,325
2021	\$6,162,000
2022	\$6,658,238
2023	\$6,276,002

TOTAL KWH USED

2012	90,244,095
2013	99,826,108
2014	102,067,527
2015	96,557,188
2016	95,406,619
2017	97,047,679
2018	103,396,323
2019	103,360,213
2020	100,374,906
2021	99,296,260
2022	105,338,954
2023	102,564,085

GHOST TOWNS

South Dakota's History Remembered

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Scattered across open fields and through narrow mountain gulches, a careful eye can spot many of South Dakota's nearly 250 long-lost prairie villages and prospecting towns.

Many of these communities were once thriving outposts, railroad hubs, farming villages and mining towns, but were dealt their final blows by the hardships of the dust bowl, changes to railroad systems and the depletion of natural resources.

Most of the towns are long forgotten, their existence marked only by the rotted shell of an old wood barn or a crumbling foundation poking up from the ground.

Thanks to the work of local historical societies who have pieced together the history of the communities' "booms and busts" through old newspaper clippings, plat maps and land records, we can get a glimpse into the lives of the first rural South Dakotans and learn about the communities that once bustled with life.

Galena

Unique among a cavalcade of abandoned Black Hills gold-rush towns, Galena's roots are in its silver. The town was settled in the late 1870s after prospectors Patrick Donegan and John F. Cochran discovered layers of lead and silver ore near Bear Butte Creek while searching for gold deposits.

The U.S. government removed the two men from the area in accordance with Native American treaties. However,

their exile turned out to be short-lived. Donegan and Cochran returned shortly after to mine their claim as more and more gold-hungry settlers tested the increasingly unenforceable treaties.

The claim, which would later become the Sitting Bull mine, turned out to be a mother lode, according to Galena Historical Society member Jeff Jacobsen.

Over the next several years, other mining operations popped up in the gulch as the miners' families made Galena their new home. The town soon had multiple houses, a hotel, restaurant, stores, a catholic church, cemetery and school, attracting new settlers through its peak between 1881 and 1883.

Arriving from Chicago in hopes of expanding his fortune, Col. John Davey soon became a Galena mining heavyweight, buying up claims along the Bear Butte Creek, including the Sitting Bull claim.

Davey's more than 125-man operation was running smoothly until trouble arose from a claim dispute. The owners of the nearby Richmond claim suspected Davey was digging too far into the hill and mining their silver. Davey claimed he was following the path of the ore, which according to mining law, he was allowed to follow onto another claim. The Richmond claim owners said the law didn't apply to a horizontal blanket formation of ore, like the one in Galena.

A lengthy court battle ensued, and the judge shut down the Sitting Bull mine

until the ruling. Galena was suspended in controversy as many of the townsfolk found themselves out of work.

Thus began Galena's rocky "boom and bust" cycle, Jacobsen explained.

"The boom time was when Col. Davey and other mines were producing, and then the lawsuit shut that down and you have a bust," he said.

The judge ruled against Davey, and the operation never recovered. Galena would never again be the bustling town it was in the early 1880s.

"In 1892, some more people came into town and tried to start up again, so that was a boom, and then they went bankrupt, so there's a bust," Jacobsen continued. "There's like three or four cycles like that in Galena."

By the mid 1930s, the town had seen its final bust. The mining wasn't comparable to the riches of the past, and interest in the gulch slowly started to fade. The tracks were removed and the school house closed in 1943.

Today, Galena is the best-preserved Ghost Town in South Dakota. On the second Saturday of each June, visitors can tour the town, visit the maintained graveyard and go inside the newly-restored schoolhouse, courtesy of the Galena Historical Society.

"It just kind of stands out," Jacobsen said. "Galena is just one of the very few silver mining areas in the Black Hills when almost everyone else was trying for gold."



Galena School
Photo Credit: Galena Historical Society

Did You Know

In 1947, Deadwood resident Ollie Wiswell came across an orphaned coyote pup while he was out on a hike. He gave the pup, named Tootsie, to Fred and Esther Borsch of Galena. Tootsie gained fame as the mascot for the Borschs' Deadwood liquor store, famously appearing on the store's sign. Fred taught Tootsie to howl along to his singing, and the two recorded the album "South Dakota Tootsie."

Tootsie, at this point a South Dakota mascot, rode through parades, was featured in an airline advertising campaign, and even embarked on a nationwide tour where she visited the White House and performed for President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Vice President Richard Nixon.

Gov. George Mickelson, a fan of Tootsie himself, signed legislation in 1949 making the coyote the state's official animal. Tootsie died in 1959 and is buried near her home in Galena.

Argonne

About nine miles northwest of Howard, just off state Highway 25, lay the remains of the ill-fated farming community, Argonne.

Marked by a blue historical sign, travelers-by can catch a glimpse of the town's massive cement bank vault with its swinging iron door, an old silo bearing the town's name, several concrete foundations, and a house falling into its own footprint.

The town's founder, Dr. Louis Gotthelf, was a Prussian-born physician who emigrated to the United States in the aftermath of the Prussian revolution. Gotthelf staked his claim in 1881 and established the townsite in 1886.

The town was originally called St. Mary's, named after Gotthelf's daughter, and was strategically positioned along the Chicago and North Western railroad, with the streets running parallel to the railroad rather than the traditional east-west layout. Confusion with another St. Mary's led to the residents voting to change the name to Argonne in 1920, which was chosen to honor local soldiers who had served in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive during World War I.

Despite having what should have been a prime location, Argonne failed to grow to Gotthelf's satisfaction, and he left with his family for Parker in 1889.

A 1919 land boom in South Dakota finally turned things around for Argonne, Miner County Historical Society member George Justice Forster said.

"Most of the growth that happened initially was when it kind of took off as a

trade center," he explained. "Suddenly the town had a railway depot, lumberyard, farmer's cooperative and general store."

In the early 20s, Argonne's population boomed to about 100 residents, and the town offered new amenities including a school, blacksmith and post office.

Argonne's peak was short-lived, and by 1930 the population had fallen to about 65 residents.

When Doug Jerlow moved to town in 1953, much of what was built in the town's prime was left abandoned, and most of the businesses that did remain were struggling.

"It was past the peak," Jerlow recounted. "One general store closed when the post office inside it closed, and that was an elderly lady who ran that and lived in a house by herself. The Haxby family's store was open for maybe a year or two after that."

Though the town was facing a bleak outlook, there remained one huge point of pride for Argonne: high school basketball.

Delbert Gillam, also known as the

Argonne Ace, led the Argonne Arrows to a 10-1 start in his junior year in 1953. Gillam also broke the state record for the most points scored by a player in a single game, making 31 field goals and 10 free throws, scoring 72. Argonne still holds this record.

The high school closed in 1956, but the community limped on for a few more years before the grade school closed in 1970 when the railroad picked up and left.

Doug Jerlow's family, the last residents of Argonne, left town that same year.

Jerlow pointed out that while many other communities along the rail line like Unityville, Canova, Carthage, and Esmond struggled to recover from the abandonment of the line, for Argonne, it was the death blow.

Now, Forster and other members of the Miner County Historical Society are working to preserve the history of Argonne.

A historical marker will soon be placed east of Argonne on state Highway 25 that will tell the story of Argonne from its founding to its final household.

Though Jerlow now lives near Madison, he still farms near Argonne and owns most of the former townsite. As the unofficial mayor of Argonne, as Jerlow sometimes calls himself, he wants to keep the memory of his childhood hometown alive.

"It was just a nice community to grow up in," he said. "Those small communities, I think it's becoming harder to find them anymore."



Argonne Arrows
Photo Credit: Miner County Historical Society

2024 DIRECTOR CANDIDATE PROFILES



Clint Clark, District 1

Clint Clark, Morrystown, owns and operates his ranch near Morrystown. He and Narcel, his wife of 34 years, raised three children together: Courtney, Garrett and Paige. They now have seven grandchildren.

Along with ranching, Clint has worked for the SDSU Extension office and NDSU Research office,

providing much needed insight on our rural way of life.

He has served on Moreau-Grand's board since 2013 and is running unopposed for his District 1 seat.

When asked why he wants to be on the MGE board of directors, Clint said, "I like reliable and affordable electricity," and he intends to keep it that way.



Brent Schweitzer, District 3

Brent Schweitzer, Timber Lake, farms and ranches with his father and brother six miles east of Timber Lake. He is married to Mandy Schweitzer and has three boys and two girls. He graduated from Timber

Lake School in 2006 and received an associate's degree in applied science from Lake Area Tech in Watertown in 2011. Prior to moving back home, Brent worked in the energy sector in North Dakota. He was a wind service technician, diagnosing and servicing 2.3 MW and 3 MW wind turbines. He also monitored and maintained reliability-based systems in natural gas plants in North Dakota, using vibration analysis and infrared technology.

He is active in the Timber Lake Rodeo Club, serving as Director from 2017-2021 and Treasurer from 2021-present. He helps with Timber Lake Youth Football (grades 3-5) and volunteers on many community projects, including Doug Kraft Field, Saint Joseph Center, Timber Lake School outdoor basketball court,

and many more.

When asked why he wants to be on the MGE Board of Directors, Brent said, "I want to be on the Board of Directors because I believe I can add value with the knowledge I have gained over the years in different energy sectors. Since living in the community, I have an understanding of the members' needs."



Roger Lawien, District 3

As written by Roger Lawien

Roger and his wife, Kris have deep roots in the West River community and reside in Timber Lake. His history of service includes having been one of the founding members of the Timber Lake and Area Development organization, served on the Timber Lake City Council,

and acted as a director of the Timber Lake Ambulance Board. On a broader scale, Roger contributed eight years as a board member and treasurer for the South Dakota Rural Electric Line Patrol Charity Fund and held roles as a board member and President of the South Dakota Rural Electric Member Services Group and 10 years as an instructor at the SDREA Metering School. Currently, he represents his church as the board president of the Prairie Parish of Isabel and Timber Lake.

Following graduation from Timber Lake High School, Roger attended the Utility Lineman Training program at Northeast Nebraska Community College. He worked as a construction lineman for six years. As a businessman he owned and operated Lawien Sales and Construction, was first to provide local internet service, and then dedicated over 20 years to serving the Moreau-Grand Electric membership as Director of Member Services and Information Technology.

The role of a board member is crucial for Moreau-Grands continued effective operation, ensuring it meets members' needs and positively impacts the community. I feel that serving in this capacity offers a chance to make a meaningful contribution. It's an opportunity to lead, serve, and advocate for the well-being of our members, our cooperative and rural communities we serve.



Bob Keckler, District 4

Robert Keckler, Eagle Butte, ranches with his wife, Arliss. Over the last 63 years, they have raised four children: Kevin, Justin, Dean and Jess, and they are the proud grandparents and great grandparents to many kids. Always looking for

something to do, Robert enjoys working with horses, ranching, and spending time with friends and family.

Along with serving on Moreau-Grand's board since 2000, Keckler serves as a Dewey County Commissioner. He is the incumbent running for reelection in District 4. Directorship allows him to represent the people of his district, which he finds very fulfilling because, "People thank you for helping them and working for them."



Oren Lesmeister, District 4

Oren Lesmeister, Parade, runs a cow-calf and farming operation and Fox Ridge Ag Supply, LLC. He and his wife, Tracy, have three adult children and six grandchildren. He graduated from C-EB High School in 1984 and went on to receive an Ag Technology degree from Western Dakota Vo-Tech. He also served in

the South Dakota National Guard for nine years.

He has always been involved in the Eagle Butte area. Growing up he was in 4-H and FFA. As an adult, he has been a part of the EB Volunteer FD and the EB Mason's Lodge. He has served on the EB Co-op board of directors and currently serves on the SD Farmer's Union board of directors and the Tri-County Mni Waste Water board. He has been representing District 28A in the SD House of Representatives for the past eight years.

When asked why he wants to be on the MGE Board of Directors, Oren said, "I have always been interested in cooperatives and the way they operate ever since being on the Eagle Butte Co-op board and involved with SD Farmers Union. Cooperatives have been the backbone to a lot of Midwest and upper northern plains communities in the early electrification days. REA's are one of the biggest reasons we had electricity in our rural areas. The director training I attended while on the Eagle Butte Co-op board will still help me with understanding how the Moreau-Grand Electric Co-op works."

Committed to Serving Your Cooperative

Employee	Years of Service
Melissa Maher , General Manager.....	40
Neil Hahne , Eagle Butte Service Lineman.....	35
Kent Larson , Line Superintendent.....	32
Wendy Shupick , Eagle Butte MS Rep.....	31
Chad Mettler , Journeyman Lineman.....	25
Justin Thorstenson , Eagle Butte Line Foreman.....	24
Jody Pateneau , Mechanic/Groundsman.....	23
Josh Lemburg , Asst. Line Superintendent.....	19
Hunter Smith , Staking Foreman.....	12
Jace Vrooman , Journeyman Lineman.....	12
Garret Simon , Journeyman Lineman.....	10
Troy Long , Timber Lake Line Foreman.....	10

Brock Fischer , Journeyman Lineman.....	6
Deb Thill , Custodian.....	6
Jess Keller , Material Work Order Clerk.....	5
Tyler Olson , Journeyman Lineman.....	4
Ethan Aberle , Journeyman Lineman.....	4
Kyrie Lemburg , Financial Officer.....	4
Tammi Ducheneaux , Operations Clerk.....	3
Stephanie Bartlett , Billing Supervisor.....	2
Jamie Jones , Accountant.....	2
JJ Martin , Member Services & IT Director.....	1
Brent Spafford , Apprentice Lineman.....	1
Collin Grage , Apprentice Lineman.....	1

COMPARATIVE REPORT	Current (July 2024)	1 year ago (July 2023)	10 Years Ago (July 2014)	% Change in 10 years
Number of Meters	7,144	7,134	6,805	5%
Kilowatt Hours Sold	8,319,146	7,410,128	7,278,868	14%
Cost of Purchased Power	\$557,209	\$527,141	\$464,388	20%
Overall Ave. Rate / kWh Per Member	0.1261	0.1213	0.1101	15%

SEPT. 14-OCT. 27
Mazing Acres Fall Festival
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
30851 433rd Ave.
Yankton, SD
605-760-2759



SEPT. 27-29
Coal Springs Threshing Bee and Antique Show
Meadow, SD
605-788-2299

OCT. 4-5
Holman Acres Pumpkin Fest and Vendor Show
Philip, SD
605-441-1060

OCT. 4-5
25th Annual Pumpkin Fest
Webster, SD
<https://webstersd.com/home>

OCT. 5-6
Run Crazy Horse Marathons
Crazy Horse
605-390-6137
www.runcrazyhorse.com

OCT. 5-6
Magic Needlers Quilt Show
Codington County Extension Complex
Watertown, SD
605-881-3273

OCT. 5-6
The Black Market
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
Sioux Falls, SD
605-332-6004

OCT. 6
Giant Pumpkin Festival
Bentley Memorial Building
Bison, SD
Enter Pumpkins by 11:30 a.m.
605-244-5475

OCT. 10-11
Rural Women in Agriculture Conference
Oct. 10 from 1-9 p.m.
Oct. 11 from 7 a.m.-3 p.m.
The Lodge of Deadwood
Deadwood, SD
SouthDakotaWomeninAg.com

OCT. 11-12
Junkin' Market Days
Ramkota Exhibit Hall
Sioux Falls, SD
605-941-4958

OCT. 19
Buffalo County Fall Ball
Live Music and Food
8 p.m.
Fire Hall
Gann Valley, SD

OCT. 25-27
Forest of Fears Haunted Trail
7 p.m.-10 p.m.
Reclamation-Ranch
40787 259th St.
Mitchell, SD

OCT. 26
Hill City Children's Boo Bash and Pumpkin Festival
Hill City, SD
605-574-2368

OCT. 26
Hartford Women of Today Fall Craft Fair
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
West Central Becker Center
Hartford, SD
605-359-2049

OCT. 26
Owl-O-Ween
Noon-5 p.m.
Black Hills Raptor Center
Caputa, SD
605-391-2511

OCT. 31
Treat Street
5:30 p.m.-7 p.m.
Main St.
Milbank, SD
605-432-6656
MilbankSD.com/Chamber

NOV. 2
Fall Fling Craft Show
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Dakota Christian School
Corsica, SD
605-366-7940

NOV. 2
Reliance Christmas Carousel
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Legion Hall
Reliance, SD
605-730-0553

NOV. 22-23
Holiday Arts Christmas Craft Show
Davison County Fairgrounds
Mitchell, SD
605-359-2049

NOV. 30
A Hometown Christmas Market
2 p.m.-6 p.m.
Main St.
Elk Point, SD

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.

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