

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

Small Town, Big Dreams

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Road to the NFL**
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Employee Retirements



Melissa Maher
Manager

Linda Dahlgren’s entry on her last day of work - March 31st read – “LINDA TO 806 – THANKS FOR THE GREAT CAREER – LINDA CLEAR.” In radio lingo – 806 stands for Timber Lake Headquarters.

This is one story I’ve dreaded writing – as Linda and I almost mirror our years working here together. Our close working relationship over the years created a bond. In a typical conversation with her – she could complete my sentences as she knew so well what I was thinking. I valued her sound judgement



and common-sense approach to each, and every decision made. She views things analytically – which is truly a gift and an asset to any team.

Linda’s story started at Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative on June 9, 1986, as the billing clerk. The opening became available with the following transitions: Bart Birkeland became manager after the retirement of Ken Reed. Roger Hegre moved into the assistant manager position and Tony

Anderson moved from billing clerk into the office manager position – thus creating the opening of billing clerk. Linda came to Timber Lake by way of Dickinson, N.D., upon marrying Keith Dahlgren and moving down to their ranch south of Timber Lake.

Back then, our co-op was self-read/self-billed. Linda remembers hand entering the meter readings into the computer, with all bills printed/ stuffed and mailed out from the TL office. Lots of various forms were hand typed and mailed out. Linda worked side by side with Deb Holzer in the billing room.

In July of 1998 – Linda moved into the office clerk position. Here she completed monthly payroll, general ledger, all vehicle reports, monthly material transactions, work order closing, bank reconciliation, just to name some of her main duties.

January of 2002 – Linda was named the finance officer – the position she held for the next 21 years. In this position, Linda was responsible for the monthly Form 7 (financials); along with the year-end Form 7. She handled all loan documents including payments and accounting of such, continued with work order closing, special equipment summaries each quarter, monthly payroll, all the HR functions of our co-op on behalf of all the employees, recorder of the minutes for all board and committee meetings, insurance claims, and the list could go on. The point of relaying all of this – Linda pretty much knew and experienced every facet of the operation. Her vast knowledge suited her and the membership well over the years.

Continued on page 3



COMPARATIVE REPORT	Current (Feb 2023)	1 year ago (Feb 2022)	10 Years Ago (Feb 2013)	% Change in 10 years
Number of Meters	7,140	7,118	6,792	5%
Kilowatt Hours Sold	10,584,207	10,418,688	9,378,844	13%
Cost of Purchased Power	\$659,367.12	\$563,358.95	\$553,977.01	19%
Overall Ave. Rate / kWh Per Member	0.1139	0.1124	0.1089	5%

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS MOREAU-GRAND ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 018-951)

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Member Services & IT Director

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Design assistance by SDREA

In her 37 years of dedicated service, Linda comments that the biggest change came from tasks moving from a manual form to all being computerized with software streamlining the process.

Linda is truly going to be missed here – she was loved by all and earned the respect of all throughout her career. Her laugh was contagious and could be heard throughout the office. She is looking forward to taking on the role of more grandma time and being a full-time rancher's wife. I do believe she will keep her involvement with refereeing volleyball throughout the region and score keeping at the local basketball games. Best of luck, Linda, for years of enjoyment – you earned it!

On the heels of this retirement, the next employee here to announce their retirement is Roger Lawien, Member Service Director. Stay tuned for more on this transition. JJ Martin from Timber Lake applied and has accepted the Member Service/IT Director position to begin on June 1.

Until next month...we are all longing for spring/summer and green grass stirrup high....

Scholarship Winners

Now in its 32nd year, the scholarship program recognizes and encourages academic and community achievements of students that are dependents of our members. It is considered an investment in the economic future of America.

Applications from across the Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative service area were received. The applications were mailed to Basin Electric Power Cooperative in Bismarck, N.D., where a Scholarship Committee selected the winners.

Selection was based on ACT or SAT scores, grade point average, high school/college honors, community and school activities, employment history, future career goals and references.

In the member category, the \$1,000 scholarship provided by Moreau-Grand Electric and Basin Electric has been awarded to Natalie Biegler. Natalie is the daughter of Bo and Christa Biegler. In the employee category, Treg Thorstenson will be presented a \$1,000 scholarship provided by Moreau-Grand Electric and Basin Electric. Treg is the son of Justin and Julie Thorstenson.

Congratulations, Natalie and Treg, on a job well done!



Annual Audit Performed



Elijah Houchens and Jordan Jones preparing the 2022 Moreau-Grand audit.

The auditing firm of Ketel Thorstenson, LLP, of Rapid City, S.D., completed the annual audit of Moreau-Grand Electric's records. The annual audit provides management and the board of directors with an independent opinion as to the accuracy and accounting compliance of the cooperative's financial statements. It is a check of the co-op's system of internal controls and compliance with the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) regulations. The audit includes checking member electric account billings, inventory of material and supplies, board minutes, policies and review of other accounting transactions. RUS requires an annual audit of the electric cooperative's books by an approved accounting firm with a final report being sent to RUS, the Cooperative Finance Corporation and to the Moreau-Grand Electric board of directors for its review.

Workplace Safety: Avoid Common Electrical Hazards

Contact with or exposure to electricity is one of the leading causes of workplace fatalities. Follow these tips to avoid electrical injury:

Overhead Power Line Contact

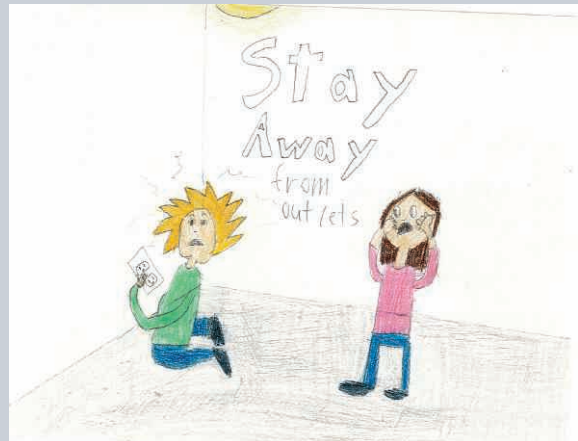
- 46% of all electrical fatalities are caused by contact with overhead power lines
- 57% of overhead power line fatalities were in non-electrical occupations
- Always assume all lines are live and dangerous
- Always look up; be aware of overhead power lines
- Keep yourself and equipment at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines
- Do not touch anything that is in contact with overhead power lines
- Carry equipment, including ladders, horizontally to avoid contact with power lines
- Stay at least 35 feet away from downed lines

Accidental Contact with Energized Conductors or Parts

- 45% of all electrical fatalities were caused by working on or near energized conductors or parts
- 74% of these fatalities were in electrical occupations
- Always test for voltage before you perform work. Be sure to also test the area around the equipment you are working on to avoid accidental contact with energized equipment
- Always perform a site and risk assessment before conducting work. Hazards exist on and near the equipment you are working on
- When possible, turn off power before conducting work
- Follow proper lockout / tagout procedures
- Avoid complacency. Every job is different, make sure you follow the hierarchy of controls and other electrical safety work practices on every job

Electrical Safety in the Workplace

- 69% of all electrical fatalities involved non-electrical occupations
- Know when to say when. If you feel unsafe performing a job, say something
- Be aware of potential electrical hazards in the workplace. Avoid electrical rooms and other potentially hazardous areas
- All electrical work should be completed by qualified workers with proper training
- GFCI protection should be installed where electricity and water may come in contact
- Five sources accounted for 92% of all electrical fatalities
 - Overhead power lines
 - Unexpected contact with electricity
 - Working on energized parts
 - Ground faults
 - Damaged wiring



Power Line Safety

Serena Dekrey, age 9

Serena Dekrey, age 9, gives wise advice to readers on electrical safety. She cautions us to be careful around power outlets. Serena is the daughter of Don and Cassandra Dekrey, members of Sioux Valley Energy based in Colman, S.D.

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

COMFORTING CASSEROLES

PHEASANT CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

1 pheasant
1/2 cup melted butter
Bacon grease
1/2 cup flour
4 cups milk
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper

METHOD

Mix flour, salt, pepper, and roll pieces of pheasant in the mixture. Brown in bacon grease. In separate pan, mix butter, milk, and 6 T flour. Stir and bring to a boil. Pour over the pheasant that had been put in a baking dish with bacon laid over it. Bake until tender.

Gail Klipfel
Ellendale, N.D.

TACO CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

1 1/2 pounds ground beef
1 package taco seasoning mix
1 can (16 ounces) pinto beans, drained and rinsed
1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce
1 can (11 ounces) whole kernel corn, drained
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1 cup crushed tortilla chips

METHOD

Preheat oven to 400°F. Brown meat in large skillet on medium-high heat. Drain fat. Stir in seasoning mix, beans, tomato sauce and corn. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes. Spoon into 2-quart baking dish. Sprinkle with cheese and tortilla chips. Bake 5 to 10 minutes or until cheese is melted. Serve with assorted toppings, if desired.

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CHICKEN, BROCCOLI, AND RICE CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

1 lb. chicken tenders
1 cup long grain rice
1 1/2 cups chicken stock
1 cup milk
2 tsps. garlic powder
2 tsps. onion powder
1 1/2 tsps. whole rosemary leaves, crushed
1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
1/2 tsp salt
2 cups broccoli florets
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

METHOD

Preheat oven to 400°F. Spread chicken and rice in greased 2-quart baking dish. Mix stock, milk and seasonings in medium bowl with wire whisk until well blended. Slow pour over chicken and rice. Cover with foil. Bake 45 minutes. Remove foil. Stir in broccoli. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake, uncovered, 15 minutes longer or until rice has absorbed all the liquid and broccoli is tender.

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 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Necessary Steps for Solar Commissioning



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services
Group

Q: I'm interested in adding solar panels to my house. What steps do I need to take?

A: Getting a solar photovoltaic system installed and operational on your house or property involves working with several parties to ensure a safe and functional system. You need to work with your electric utility, local building department and a solar contractor.

Here are the solar commissioning steps you need to take.

Do Your Research

If you are considering a solar PV installation, I recommend starting with research. The cost of a residential solar photovoltaic system varies based on your location, the type of components used and the size of the system. With average costs ranging from \$16,000 to \$36,000, installing a solar system is a significant investment for most homeowners.

In my experience, people decide to install solar panels for financial benefit, environmental impact or a combination of the two.

The financial benefit of generating your own electricity is dependent on your energy use, the cost of the system, electric rates, and the specific rules and regulations for your state and electric utility.

Your electric utility can help you understand electric bill rate structures. Many states offer net metering, a billing mechanism that gives the owner credit for any extra electricity the system produces and supplies back to the power grid. If your utility offers net metering, ask about being compensated for excess power generated by your solar PV system.

The environmental benefit of installing a solar system is based on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. This benefit is dependent on the type of electricity generation that powers your home. You can check with your utility to learn about its energy sources. This information provides you a better understanding of the type of power your PV system will offset.

You should also reach out to your local building department to learn about the permitting and inspection process.

Solar Proposals

To find out potential costs and estimated energy production, you need a proposal from a solar contractor. I recommend getting two or three proposals from different contractors to compare system design and cost. You can also request a reference from a previous customer in your area.

Solar contractors work in multiple utility service territories and may not be familiar with the requirements in your state or at your electric utility. I always recommend reaching out to your electric utility before signing a solar installation contract. You want to understand your monthly electric bill costs, as well as the monthly solar system costs, after installing solar.

Interconnection Agreement

If you commit to a home solar installation, you will sign an interconnection agreement with your electric utility. This contract between you and your utility stipulates the terms of connecting a distributed generation system, such as a solar PV system.

Permits and Inspections

You or your contractor will work with the local building department for the necessary permitting prior to installation. Once the system is installed, you likely will need final inspections from the building department and the electric utility. Your utility will grant permission to operate prior to energizing your system. Don't assume your local building department will communicate with your electric utility. In my experience, this doesn't always happen.

Because the solar installation process involves multiple parties, preapproval and post inspections, it is important to check with your local utility and building department before committing to a solar PV installation.



Knowing the steps to solar commissioning can take the stress out of your installation.



A Fun Escape

Escape Rooms Gaining Popularity for Group Fun

Jocelyn Johnson

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Conquering the riddle draws groups to the growing popularity of escape rooms. This is a relatively new attraction in South Dakota for many merry groups looking for an afternoon of fun.

An escape room is nothing more than a riddle room. It challenges its participants to get out – if they can.

Across the state, there are 10 businesses that offer this activity for fun. Black Hills Escape Rooms, located in downtown Rapid City, is one that opened in 2016. They accommodate five escape rooms, each with a distinctive scenario, entertaining guests with a storyline full of unique hints. The story of each room varies along with the difficulty level.

Ryan Comer, manager of Black Hills Escape Rooms, said the activity attracts groups looking to celebrate birthdays, family get-togethers, bachelorette parties and more. Businesses also rent out the rooms for employee team-building exercises

or holiday parties. Comer stated summer is the busy season for these groups, but Christmas is also busy with people looking to conquer the holiday themed escape rooms.

“People get addicted to these rooms,” said Comer. “It’s all about how adventurous you are and who’s in your group.”

Yet, despite the extra precautions and supportive group effort, a few still get anxious about being trapped.

“The main fear that some people feel when getting into one of these escape rooms is claustrophobia, which might detour some people from even wanting to try it,” said Comer. “But here, we always leave one door open for them to leave at any time. At other places, you might get locked in until you solve

the puzzle or the time ends.”

Each group is given one competitive hour to escape but is offered two hours to solve the riddle in every room. Two people is the minimum number of required participants and eight is the highest recommend number. Yet, Comer said four to six participants per room was the sweet spot for each of their escape rooms.

“Really though, it’s not about the number of people you bring, it’s who you bring,” said Comer. “I’ve had a group of two people make escapes in record time and groups of eight who couldn’t find a way out.”



Friends put heads together to solve their riddle and escape the room.

TUCKER KRAFT



SMALL TOWN, BIG DREAMS

Kraft refuses to go down amongst a group of Redbird defenders.

Tucker Kraft's Road to the NFL

Frank Turner

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With a population of 500 residents, Timber Lake, S.D., may seem similar to many small-town communities across the state. The town is known for its scenic beauty, outdoor recreational opportunities, and rich history. However, what really sets Timber Lake apart from the rest is a homegrown NFL prospect: Tucker Kraft.

At an impressive 6-foot-5 and weighing 254 pounds, Kraft has proven himself to be South Dakota's latest up-and-coming football star. Ask any fan of college football and they will tell you that Kraft has the size and skill set to make waves on a professional level.

Luckily, Kraft's talents haven't gone unnoticed. During his latest breakout season as SDSU's All-American tight end, Kraft left an impression on NFL

scouts with his ability to outrun opponents, snatch incredible catches and charge through multiple tackles. A top contributor in nearly every game, Kraft led the Jackrabbits to their first-ever FCS National Championship. The historic season quickly cemented Kraft's place as a top tight end in the NFL Draft.

Kraft recalls the moment everything fell into place: "I just realized that when I had the ball, no one could touch me," he said. "I knew after that season that I was completely capable of playing with the pros."

Timber Lake High School head football coach Ryan Gimbel says he is not surprised to see his former stu-



Tucker Kraft

dent and player on the doorstep of the NFL. Countless hours in the weight room and gym, he said, revealed Kraft to be a student-athlete with incredible drive.

“Seeing the raw natural talent of Tucker spoke for itself and what he could accomplish, but he also had the dedication to take it to that next level,” said Gimbel. “To me, it wasn’t a surprise, and that was our running joke when he left high school – ‘I’ll see you playing on Sundays.’”

Kraft’s journey to the NFL, however, was not without its fair share of adversity. Growing up in Timber Lake, Kraft lost his father to a plane crash when he was only 12 years old. Kraft overcame the childhood tragedy with his two brothers and mother by working tirelessly on and off the field. Honoring his father’s legacy, Kraft followed in his father’s footsteps to become an All-American college star like his father had done before him.

“My brothers took a big part in raising me after my dad died,” said Kraft. “My mom, my aunts and uncles all played a role, but I pride myself on getting a lot of things done independently.”

Steely determination has carried Kraft to the highest level of football, and not even dramatic injury has been able to slow him down. In November Kraft officially declared his name in the NFL draft. Kraft’s friends and family cheered him on as he showed off his incredible strength and skill on national television at the NFL Combine. There, Kraft proved his ability to play alongside the likes of Dallas Goedert, Riley Reiff and South Dakota’s other pro footballers.

“I was kind of star-struck walking in,” said Kraft. “Sitting down with the head coaches of the NFL franchise, you realize that you are at this level now. This is a job interview.”

The NFL Combine, however, will

not be the last of Kraft’s time on national television. Ranked as the sixth top tight end, Kraft’s eyes are set on the draft in April. And, although he hails from somewhere small, Kraft plans to loom large on the field as a starting player with great potential.

“I want to go to a team that’s going to use me, whether I’m on the line of scrimmage in the trenches with the big guys or catching balls and getting yards after the catch. I want to make an impact on a team, day one.”

Whatever happens in April, Kraft’s hometown is ready to cheer him on. According to Gimbel, most of Timber Lake is ready to don colors and jerseys that they are not used to wearing to support their hometown kid.

“The buzz in our town has just erupted,” said Gimbel. “Our community, school, and family friends – they all want to see him be successful in the opportunity that he has worked for.”



NFL prospect Tucker Kraft evades a tackler, leading SDSU to a 31-7 win last November against the Illinois State Redbirds.

Commitment to a Culture of Safety

Roger Lawien

Member Service/IT Director

This month, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on the importance of safety. May is Electrical Safety Month and Moreau-Grand Electric will be sharing safety tips and reminders on our Facebook and website throughout the month to help raise awareness about the dangers of electricity. We all depend on electricity to power our lives, but accidents can happen when electricity is improperly used. Please take a moment to look around your homes and businesses for potential electrical hazards and correct them. *24183 BIA 14*

Our Responsibility to You

Moreau-Grand's concern for safety extends beyond our



Journeyman Lineman Troy Long describing the tools he uses to safely do his job.



Brayden M. got to try on some of the safety equipment M-G personnel wear.

employees. We care deeply about the safety of our members, and this month, we encourage you to plug into safety. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured and electrocuted because of electrical fires, accidents, and electrocution in their own homes. We strive to provide our communities with safe, reliable, and affordable electricity and to serve as your trusted energy advisor, now and well into the future. We were honored to be invited to participate in Family Fun Night at the Timber Lake School and provide a

place for ambulance training at one of our facilities.

Our Responsibility to Employees

It is no accident that safety is a top priority at your cooperative. We are committed to a culture of safety that is integral to our daily operations. In fact, our line workers are required to always wear personal protective



Area ambulance personnel learning how to use new telecommunications equipment in their ambulances.



Journeyman Lineman Neil Hahne inspecting and maintaining protective equipment.

clothing that will self-extinguish, limiting potential injuries from burns and sparks. Insulated and rubber gloves are worn in tandem to protect from electrical shock. We test and maintain all our equipment, including our truck fleet. Moreau-Grand Electric employees have clocked over 185,000 accident-free manhours!



Journeyman Lineman Jace Vrooman testing grounding equipment.

March. 21, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes and Jan. 2023 Financial Information

The March 21, 2023, board of directors' meeting was held at the Timber Lake office with the following directors present: Bartlett, Clark, Hieb, Landis, Lawrence, Maher, McLellan, Walker and Wall, director absent: Keckler and others present: Manager Maher, Finance Officer Dahlgren and Finance Officer Lemburg (Delegated Recorder of Minutes).

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

Manager Maher announced that JJ Martin, of Timber Lake, has accepted the Member Services/IT position and will begin employment on June 1, 2023.

The Member Services report was given by Roger Lawien, which included successfully moving the TWACS servers to Rushmore Electric, Outage Management System, computer updates, youth tour updates, meter testing and repairs, upcoming advertising, and scholarship updates.

The Operations report was given by Kent Larson, which included line inspections, snow removal at substations, SDREA Safety Meeting, updated Emergency Record Forms and Mayday Checklist, and EXO and Bell Lumber & Pole Company have increased their prices significantly.

Erik Sonju, President of Power System Engineering, presented an overview of the 2023-2026 Construction Work Plan via a Microsoft Teams meeting. Topics included an existing system overview, demand growth, high level observations and capital spending projections.

Manager Maher gave the Managers report, which included Basin Electric financials, disaster declaration update, Load Management Report, thank you note, and Basin Electric annual meeting will be held Aug. 15-17, 2023.

Manager Maher gave an update on the new headquarters facility. She signed a contract with Capital City Construction of Bismarck and the project will begin soon.

Manager Maher discussed the IJIA Grant funds that are available through the Federal Government. Moreau-Grand Electric has submitted four applications for various projects.

Chairperson Bartlett gave the Policy Committee meeting report.

The Board discussed the CFC Forum scheduled for June 19-21, 2023, in Seattle, WA, and no Director expressed interest in attending.

President Hieb discussed a vacant RESCO Board position, and no Director expressed interest in serving on the Board.

Directors Lawrence and Landis gave a report on Co-op Day at the Capitol, which included attending committee hearings and a good turnout.

Director Lawrence gave the Rushmore Board meeting report, which included financials, investments at Basin Electric, Operating Report, load control program, preliminary 2022 audit report was reviewed, grant funding available, revenue deferral disbursements, 2022 capital credit allocations, WAPA contract updates, and a new IT person has been hired.

Director McLellan gave the NRECA PowerXchange report, which included motivational speakers and 2023 proposed resolutions.

Director Maher gave a legislative update to the Board.

Board approved the following: the agenda, the minutes from the February meeting, the minutes from the Policy Committee meeting, new members, refunds, line extensions, financial statistics, disbursements, safety report, changes to Policies 10-9 and 40-18, and changed the April board meeting date to April 24, 2023.

The next board meeting was scheduled for April 24, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. in the Timber Lake office.

MEMBER NOTICE:

The following member notice is to be posted on the cooperative website and published annually in the monthly newsletter.

In an attempt to utilize available technology in an efficient manner, your electric cooperative has implemented a remote program that will allow us to disconnect and/ or reconnect your electric service without a Moreau-Grand Electric employee being physically dispatched to your meter location. This technology allows more flexibility in the time management of cooperative employees; thus, benefiting all Moreau-Grand Electric members. Please be aware this technology DOES NOT require that the Moreau-Grand Electric member be at the meter site when a member is disconnected or reconnected, and power may be restored or disconnected at any time when pertinent conditions prevail.

LOCATE YOUR 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." Congratulations to member Dorothy Opp for winning last month. Keep looking, the next winner may be you!

January 2023 Financial Information

	JAN. '23	JAN. '22	YTD 2023
Operating Revenues	\$1,289,423	\$1,332,966	\$1,289,423
Cost Of Power	\$329,883	\$712,195	\$329,883
Cost Of Electric Service	\$934,534	\$1,265,803	\$934,534
Margins	\$370,548	\$68,970	\$370,548
kWh Purchased	12,075,394	12,613,563	12,075,394
kWh Sold	11,066,869	11,680,401	11,066,869



ELECTRIC SAFETY IN ACTION

In a controlled demonstration, Journeyman Lineman Brady Gaer uses life-size equipment on the high voltage demonstration trailer to educate students about electricity.

Empowering the Public to Stay Safe

Frank Turner

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Electric safety is a topic that South Dakota students are excited to engage with. They often ask questions like, “What should you do if your tractor equipment touches a power line?” or “How can birds sit safely on a power line?” or even “What does it look like when something comes in contact with high voltage?”

These are some of the most popular questions Oahe Electric’s Chief Financial Officer Valerie Marso has not only been answering but also demonstrating for more than 20 years.

“They always just have tons of questions,” said Marso. “It’s always fun to hear what they come up with next.”

It’s not just for entertainment, however. Oahe Electric and its employees are committed to realizing their goal of zero accidents at home and at work. Part of preventing tragedy starts with educating the public, especially youth, on how to stay safe around electricity.

In the last year alone, Oahe Electric traveled to nine different schools and led demonstrations for more than 900 students. For Marso, verbal communication is only half the battle when it comes to educating students

about electric safety. The real impact, she said, comes from showing them.

“The visuals and the noise that the high voltage makes really lands in a way that you just can’t convey with words,” said Marso. “It can scare the students a little bit, but I think it gives them a healthy respect for electricity.”

Co-op across the state, including Oahe Electric, use three different interactive safety demonstrations to hone their message about safety: Power Town, Co-ops in the Classroom and the high voltage demonstration trailer.

One of the most popular, Power Town, is a small-scale, tabletop model of a few quaint houses attached to a small power grid. The miniature electrical system shows students how electrical current moves through

various items they may encounter in their daily lives, presented in a fun and easy-to-learn format. Line-workers, who work on the real equipment every day, lead the demonstration and teach students about personal protective equipment worn by co-op employees to complete their jobs safely.

Co-op in the Classroom is yet another powerful initiative South Dakota co-ops engage in to promote safety across the state. Working in conjunction with East River's Education and Outreach Program, co-ops meet the students where they are in the classroom to teach local youth the importance of respecting electricity through hand-on lessons that engage and excite the audience.

Lastly, the high voltage demonstration trailer is a portable unit that carries life-size equipment from events to local schools. It's a demonstration that always leaves an impression. Within a safe environment, students get to see actual equipment, such as utility poles, electrical conductors and distribution transformers, in action. Each hour-long demonstration shows what can happen when objects such as animals, trees, ladders and even fruit come into contact with power lines.

"This is equipment that our linemen work on every day, so they are comfortable showing these students how energy works," said Marso.

These demonstrations not only

entertain, but also promote a healthy and safe environment for co-op members and the public. During one of Oahe Electric's latest outreach events, Marso recalled listening to a small group of kids talk about how they sometimes sit on "the green boxes." They were referring to underground transformers. It became a teachable moment that left an impact on both the students and teachers.

"We told them to never touch them," she said. "You never know what going on in there, and it's always better to be safe than sorry. It was at least one person who took something home and actually used it. Moments like that show we are really making an impact with these students."



Oahe Electric Power Supply Specialist Steve Long teaches electric safety using Power Town, a miniature model used in safety demonstrations.



SEWING MEMORIES

The Farmers' Daughters' Sewing Museum is located in Vermillion, S.D.

Take a Stitch Back in Time

Jocelyn Johnson

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A stitch in time saves family memories and sews history together at The Farmers' Daughters' Sewing Museum just outside of Vermillion, S.D. A mom and five daughters hold a passion for sewing and for the history of household sewing machines.

Collecting domestic vintage sewing machines began more than 20 years ago for Sally Abild who visited

auctions with her mom, Evelyn Hanson. There, they found various vintage sewing machines and began collecting them.

"I would see these vintage machines that were being sold for little or nothing," Sally said. "I hurt, in a way, for the families because I thought, 'These are a part of their history.' If I had my grandmother's or my mother's sewing machine, I would be extremely happy to have it."

She purchased 20 machines, not

knowing what to do with them, but wanting to preserve them. They were first stored in an old farmhouse before eventually moving to a milking barn, which was homesteaded by Sally's husband – Dick Abild's great grandfather. The barn was renovated and opened as a museum in 2017.

The museum's collection of sewing machines grew with contributions from her sisters.

"They would come across machines I had never seen in the Midwest," Sally said. "In the bigger cities, there was more money in the mid-1800s when sewing machines started to pop up. You would find a bigger selection in those areas that you didn't find in rural areas."

Sally and her sisters, Gloria, Marie, Linda and Geri, carefully researched the history of each machine they owned, putting them in order and fixing them up. Today, visitors to The Farmers' Daughters' Sewing Museum are able to view more than 120 vintage machines along with treasured family mementos. Sally's family has a legacy of sewing their own clothes. She remembers her great grandmother making dresses from feed sacks and her mother, Evelyn, would sew clothes for the family on her treadle machine, since electricity wasn't available on the farm until the 1950s.

"I had to learn how to sew growing up," Sally said. "If I wanted something new, I had to learn how to make it for myself."

The Farmers' Daughters' Sewing Museum is one of three vintage sewing museums in the United States. "We collect domestic vintage machines – meaning our machines were the first to be used by families in the home and were made of all metal," Sally said. "A machine that has



Sally Abild and her family pose outside of the Farmers' Daughters' Sewing Museum.

plastic in it is not a vintage machine."

One of the oldest domestic, vintage machines on display at the museum is one by Elias Howe, who made the first official patented and manufactured sewing machine in 1846.

"We also have a Singer Model 12, which came out after the Civil War," she said. "Isaac Singer sold them door-to-door to families and was credited with coming up with the first payment plan – allowing up to 10 years to pay for this machine. It's said that Singer's Model 12 was the machine that clothed a nation."

The most unique machine that Sally favors, however, is a Wilcox and Gibbs that came about it the mid-1800s.

"It's a small, chain-stitch machine that was loved by many women back then," Sally said. "They could easily take it

from house to house, and it was easy to use. It's also the symbol we use for our museum."

Most vintage sewing machines tended to be family heirlooms, which were passed down from generation to generation.

"Many women who visit the museum have a machine that was passed down to them by their mothers or grandmothers and want to find out more information on them," Sally said. "Men love to visit too to learn more about the mechanics of these machines."

Sally revealed the transition from vintage sewing machines, made with metal, to newer sewing machines, made with plastic, began when America gave Japan two Singer patents after World War II. Japan capitalized on this and managed to perfect a design that they sold in America for a third of the cost. To compete with this, Singer began to put plastic parts into their machines and before eventually going out of business in 1988. Consequently, the age of vintage sewing machines ended when the convenience and affordability of plastic was introduced.



Evelyn Hanson instilled the love of sewing and vintage machines in her five daughters.



May 28, 2023
Back When They Bucked
 Days of '76 Arena
 Deadwood, SD
 800-344-8826

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.

MAY 6
Cinco de Mayo Fiesta
 Lake Farley Park
 Milbank, SD
 605-432-6656

MAY 17
Norwegian Independence Day
 6 p.m.
 Vivian, SD
 605-222-3296

MAY 20
Buggy Museum Open House
 10 a.m.
 Stockholm, SD
 605-938-4192

MAY 20
Booth Day
 10 a.m.
 Booth Fish Hatchery
 Spearfish, SD
 605-642-7730

MAY 20
Frühlingsfest and Spring Market
 1 p.m.
 Main Street Square
 Rapid City, SD
 605-716-7979

MAY 25
Wine Walk
 5 p.m.
 Downtown Businesses
 Aberdeen, SD
 605-226-3441

MAY 26-28
Hidden Treasure Heritage Festival
 Lead, SD
 307-259-4484

MAY 27
Back When They Bucked All-Day Rodeo
 9 a.m.
 Days of '76 Event Complex
 Deadwood, SD
 605-717-7642

MAY 27
Norwegian Constitution Day
 11 a.m.
 Lake Norden, SD
 605-874-2171

JUNE 3
Health Connect of South Dakota: The Human Race 5K
 9 a.m.
 Sertoma Park
 Sioux Falls, SD

JUNE 11
River Honoring Community Potluck
 5 p.m.
 Clay County Park River Shelter
 Vermillion, SD
 605-670-0540

JUNE 16-18
Fine Arts In The Hills Show & Sale
 Main Street
 Hill City, SD
 605-574-2810

JUNE 18
Father's Day Fishing
 10 a.m.
 Palisades State Park
 Minnehaha County, SD
 605-594-3824

JUNE 21
2023 McCrossan Boys Ranch Golf Classic for Kids
 Central Valley Golf Course
 Hartford, SD
 605-339-1203

JUNE 23
Flandreau Fridays
 5 p.m.
 Downtown Flandreau
 Flandreau, SD

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