

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

## Mammoth Discovery

Coal Miner Finds  
Mammoth Tusk

Pages 8-9

A Golden Harvest

Pages 12-13



# New Manager Selected



**Melissa Maher**  
Manager

I will start out my report this month with the official announcement of my forthcoming retirement here at Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative on Jan. 2, 2025. I announced my intentions of retirement to the board in March of this year. I will have completed just over 40 years here working for the members of our cooperative – and will be forever grateful for the opportunity!

With this news – the board made the decision at the June board meeting to name Kent Larson, Operations Superintendent, to be the next General Manager upon my retirement. Kent has been with Moreau-Grand for 32 years; we have worked side by side for all these years. He will do an excellent job leading the way forward for our cooperative.

As I write this report – we are slowly moving into the new headquarters building, one office at a time. It occurred to me the other day – our old building is like family to me – as I've spent more waking hours here in the last 40 years than I have at home. The new building will serve the membership well into the future. We plan to have an open house in celebration of the facility during our annual meeting on Oct. 9. Mark your calendars and plan to attend!

Shawn and Kathy Olsen from Dupree will receive our “Good Neighbors” award at the annual meeting on Oct. 9. This is the 11th year in which the board makes the selection of honorees. A feature story will be forthcoming on this most deserving couple.

The decision was made at the June meeting to pay general capital credits once again via a bill credit in December. A total dollar amount will be determined at the July meeting.

Area celebrations are taking place throughout our service area. This finds us sharing with local event coordinators to provide ice-cream along with fellowship. Community members volunteer their time and energy to make these celebrations a success.

Until next month... Remember to practice safety and God's Blessings to all....



COMPARATIVE REPORT	Current (May 2024)	1 year ago (May 2023)	10 Years Ago (May 2014)	% Change in 10 years
Number of Meters	7,133	7,121	6,773	5%
Kilowatt Hours Sold	6,598,521	7,019,761	6,665,694	-1%
Cost of Purchased Power	\$410,970.49	\$430,150.68	\$386,039.89	6%
Overall Ave. Rate / kWh Per Member	0.121	0.1185	0.1169	4%

## AG APPRECIATION EVENT AT THE CENTRAL STATES FAIR

<p><b>WHEN:</b> AUGUST 20TH 5-6:30PM</p>	<p><b>WHERE:</b> MONUMENT HEALTH STAGE <small>*LOCATED INSIDE THE FAIRGROUNDS</small></p>		<p><b>WHAT:</b> -FREE MEAL -FREE FAIR ENTRANCE* -NIGHT AT THE RODEO* <small>*MORE DETAILS TO COME *RODEO TICKETS SOLD SEPARATELY</small></p>

**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.

Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Timber Lake, S.D., and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 8, Timber Lake, SD 57656; Phone (605) 865-3511; Fax (605) -865-3340; e-mail mge@mge.coop; Web site www.mge.coop. This institution is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Design assistance by SDREA

# June 18, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes and April 2024 Financial Information

The June 18, 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 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 network installation in the new headquarter facility, ice cream socials, the Outage Management System is live and working well, and update on MGEC's first solar interconnect.

Shawn and Kathy Olsen, of Dupree, were selected as the 2024 Good Neighbor Award recipients.

The Operations Report was given by Kent Larson, which included SDREA field and personal protective equipment inspections, underground replacement project, attended an SRS Users Group meeting, attended a Safety Summit, safety committee meeting, updating vehicle inspections that are conducted each month, employees are utilizing the new Outage Management System, map updates, new services, work order inspections are complete and deficiencies have been corrected, and new bucket truck will arrive soon.

Manager Maher gave the Manager's Report, which included vacancy notices being mailed, meeting with GenPro Energy Solutions to discuss renewable energy projects, meeting with CRST grant writer, Basin Electric update, and new headquarter facility update.

Manager Maher gave the Rushmore Electric Managers' meeting report, which

included editorial board update, Touchstone Energy promoting Co-ops Vote, Grip Grant update, Rushmore Electric strategic planning session, cybersecurity, Basin Electric and WAPA rate increases, and roundtable discussions.

Director McLellan gave the Rushmore Electric Board meeting report, which included renewable energy credits update, solar projects, 2025 Rushmore Electric annual meeting will be held June 4, 2025, in Deadwood, and upcoming strategic planning session.

Director Bartlett gave the Rushmore Electric annual meeting report, which included concerns about renewable energy and interesting speakers.

President Maher gave a Legislative Forum report, which included several new legislators were elected, eminent domain will affect cooperatives, potential repeal of Senate Bill 201, and sales tax repeal on consumables will be on the General Election ballot.

Manager Maher and all directors will tour MGEC's service territory and system this fall.

Board approved the following: the agenda, the minutes from the May meeting, the minutes from the Bylaw Committee meeting, new members, refunds, line extensions, financial statistics, disbursements, safety report, a general capital credit retirement in December, RUS Certificate of Authority, submit vote for the RESCO Director election, August board meeting will be held August 27th, and offered the Manager position to Kent Larson due to Manager Maher's upcoming retirement.

The next board meeting was scheduled for July 16, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. in the Timber Lake office.

<b>APRIL 2024 FINANCIAL INFORMATION</b>			
	<b>APRIL '24</b>	<b>APRIL '23</b>	<b>YTD 2024</b>
<b>Operating Revenues</b>	<b>\$1,065,298</b>	<b>\$1,030,098</b>	<b>\$4,787,995</b>
<b>Cost Of Power</b>	<b>\$466,331</b>	<b>\$528,643</b>	<b>\$2,456,022</b>
<b>Cost Of Electric Service</b>	<b>\$1,089,358</b>	<b>\$1,037,745</b>	<b>\$4,847,896</b>
<b>Margins</b>	<b>\$(11,020)</b>	<b>\$7,909</b>	<b>\$5,332</b>
<b>Kwh Purchased</b>	<b>8,357,505</b>	<b>8,976,218</b>	<b>42,264,151</b>
<b>Kwh Sold</b>	<b>8,690,573</b>	<b>7,918,080</b>	<b>39,629,341</b>

# Extreme Heat Preparation

### Learn How to Stay Hydrated

You need to drink enough water to prevent heat illness. An average person needs to drink about 3/4 of a gallon of water daily. Everyone's needs may vary.

- You can check that you are getting enough water by noting your urine color. Dark yellow may indicate you are not drinking enough.
- Avoid sugary, caffeinated and alcoholic drinks.
- If you are sweating a lot, combine water with snacks or a sports drink to replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat.
- Talk to your doctor about how to prepare if you have a medical condition or are taking medicines.

### Make a Plan to Stay Cool

Do not rely only on electric fans during extreme heat. When temperatures are in the high 90s, fans may not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off.

- Spending a few hours each day in air conditioning can help prevent heat illness.
  - If you have air conditioning, be sure that it is in working order.
  - If you do not have air conditioning or if there is a power outage, find locations where you can stay cool. For example, a public library, shopping mall or a public cooling center. Plan how you will get there.
  - Additional resources may be available from local government or community groups.
- Make sure you have plenty of lightweight, loose clothing to wear.
- Create a support team of people you may assist and who can assist you. Check in with them often to make sure that everyone is safe.

### Learn Emergency Skills

- Learn how to recognize and respond to heat illness.
- Learn First Aid and CPR.
- Be ready to live without power. Utilities may be offline. Be ready to live without power, gas and water. Plan for your electrical needs, including cell phones and medical equipment. Talk to your doctor. Plan for backup power

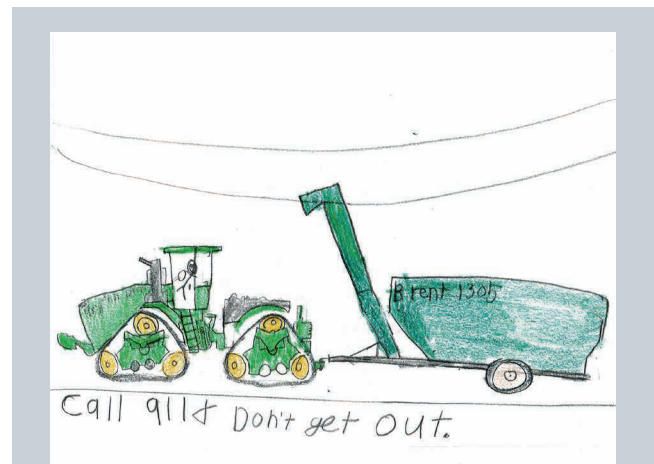
### Gather Emergency Supplies

- Gather food, water and medicine. Stores might be closed. Organize supplies into a Go-Kit and a Stay-at-Home

Kit. In the event of a power outage, you may lose access to clean drinking water. Set aside at least one gallon of drinking water per person per day. Consider adding drinks with electrolytes. Include sunscreen and wide-brimmed hats.

- Go-Kit: at least three days of supplies that you can carry with you. Include backup batteries and chargers for your devices (cell phone, CPAP, wheelchair, etc.)
- Stay-at-Home Kit: at least two weeks of supplies.
- Have a one-month supply of medication in a child-proof container and medical supplies or equipment.
- Keep personal, financial and medical records safe and easy to access (hard copies or securely backed up)
- Consider keeping a list of your medications and dosages on a small card to carry with you.

*Source: American Red Cross*



### Power Line Safety "Call 911 and Don't Get Out"

#### Hobie Klein, Age 12

Hobie Klein warns farmers to call 911 and don't get out of the tractor if contact is made with a power line. Hobie's parents are Dean and Karey Klein, 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.

# Summer SALADS

## MOM'S VEGETABLE SALAD

### Ingredients:

#### Salad

2 cans diced carrots  
1 can green beans  
1 can yellow beans  
1 small can peas  
1 can cut baby corn

*Drain all the vegetables*

#### Add

1/2 cup diced green pepper  
1 cup diced celery  
1 diced medium onion

#### Dressing

Combine in a saucepan  
1/2 cup oil  
1 1/3 cup sugar  
1/3 cup white vinegar  
1/3 cup cider vinegar  
2 Tbsp water

*Combine in a saucepan and boil until clear*

### Method

Pour dressing over vegetables and refrigerate for several hours before serving. Keeps for a week.

**Debra Clow**  
Harrisburg, S.D.

## FRESH SUMMER SALAD

### Ingredients:

3 tbsps. olive oil, divided  
1 tbsp. lime juice  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1 1/5 cups fresh corn or thawed frozen corn  
1 1/2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved  
1/2 cup cucumber, finely chopped  
2 tbsp. fresh basil, minced  
1/3 cup crumbled Feta cheese or Parmesan cheese  
1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar or Italian salad dressing

### Method

Mix 2 tablespoons of oil, lime juice and salt in a small bowl. Cook corn in a skillet with remaining 1 tbsp. oil. Pour corn into bowl, cool slightly. Add tomatoes, cucumber and basil. Refrigerate. Before serving, drizzle with dressing, cheese and balsamic vinegar or Italian dressing.

**Barb Selland**  
Mitchell, S.D.

## CHICKEN SALAD

### Ingredients:

1/2 cup plain lowfat yogurt  
2 tbsps. mayonnaise  
1 tsp. parsley flakes  
1/2 tsp. seasoned salt  
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper  
1/2 rotisserie chicken, cut into bite-size chunks (about 2 cups)  
1/2 cup thinly sliced celery  
1/4 cup chopped red onion

### Method

Mix yogurt, mayonnaise, parsley, seasoned salt and pepper in large bowl. Add chicken, celery and onion; toss to coat well. Cover. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes or until ready to serve. Serve in sandwiches or on salad greens.

[McCormick.com](http://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.

# Types of Heat Pumps



**Miranda Boutelle**  
Efficiency Services  
Group

**Q:** My heating system is 10-plus years old, and I want to switch to a heat pump. Can you help me choose the best option for my home?

**A:** Heat pumps have been around for decades, and in that time, the technology has come a long way. In my opinion, they could use a rebrand.

The name heat pump does not highlight the benefit of air conditioning that comes with the technology. Heat pumps are highly efficient because they don't use energy to create heat. Instead, they use energy to move heat – into the home in the winter and out of it in the summer. They typically produce about three times more energy than they use.

The most common types of heat pumps are air source and ground source. Air source heat pumps transfer heat from the outside air, even if it isn't particularly warm outside. Ground source, or geothermal heat pumps, transfer heat between your home and the ground. With a lower upfront price tag, air source heat pumps are more common.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, air source heat pumps can reduce heating use by about 65% compared to an electric furnace. They come in a variety of styles and configurations to fit different homes. Air source heat pump technology has been popular in warmer climates for decades. There are now cold climate versions available, too.

## Here's an explanation of how each type operates:

**Ducted air source heat pumps** are ideal for homes with existing ductwork or homes where ductwork can be feasibly added. Replacing an aging central air conditioning system with a heat pump can significantly reduce heating costs.

**Ductless heat pumps**, or mini-split heat pumps, also draw heat from the outside air. They are a great solution for homes that do not have existing ductwork.

There are many configurations to suit

different home layouts. New options on the market allow for coupling with gas or propane backup heat, which might be a good fit for your home. Ductless heat pumps can be a great option for homes with wood stoves. This can help home air quality, heat the home without gathering wood and provide air conditioning in warmer months.

**Geothermal heat pumps** transfer heat from the ground to your home. They are even more efficient than air source heat pumps, reducing energy use by 70% to 80%, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. They can also heat water for use in the home, which saves on water heating costs.

From a user experience perspective, heat pumps are a little different because the heat from the register doesn't feel quite as warm as oil, electric, natural gas or propane heat. That can take a little getting used to, but the efficiency gains and energy savings make the investment worthwhile.

Before buying a heat pump, compare equipment ratings. The higher the rating, the more efficient the equipment. If it is time to replace your heating system, I recommend making the switch to a heat pump to conserve energy and potentially save on your electric bills.

## Understanding the Backup Heat Feature

Most heat pump systems are installed with a backup or auxiliary heat for cold weather. This auxiliary heat can be electric coils, gas, propane or oil, which is usually more expensive to operate. This helps keep your home warm on cold days, but you don't want to use it if you don't need it.

For some heat pumps, turning up the thermostat too quickly or too high can trigger the backup heat. Typically, your thermostat will display emergency or auxiliary heat when using this feature. Speak to your HVAC technician to ensure your thermostat is set to maximize efficiency.

# Sparking Innovation On The Farm

**Tara Miller**

Central Electric Cooperative, Manager of Communications

The year was 1950, and a teenager named Robert Moe was living on a farm in northern Hanson County when Intercounty Electric brought power to the prairie. His parents, Chester and Myrl, had three boys and three girls. Robert was the second youngest of the Moe children.

When farms started receiving power, welding manufacturers held demonstrations to sell their products to area farmers. So, Robert's dad and his brother, Roy, purchased a 220-volt Forney brand welder.

"Intercounty Electric started small group welding classes in each county. Hanson County's classes were held at an implement dealer in Alexandria," Robert said.

After several weeks of classes, Intercounty Electric organized a contest in each county to pick the best welder, and Robert emerged as the winner in Hanson County. His skills were further recognized in a four-county contest held at the Intercounty Electric office building, where he was again named the winner.

Robert presented the first-ever 4-H welding demonstration at the South Dakota State Fair.

"Because my welding demonstration required a special electrical connection, Intercounty Electric installed an electric plug on a pole in the middle of an empty lot on the state fairgrounds."

Robert fabricated livestock gates and other farm necessities. In 1953, he also made a metal grille guard for the family's 1952 International pickup. His welding demonstrations would earn him a trip to Chicago to attend the 4-H Club Congress in the electrical division.

At age 21, Robert joined the United States Army and served for two years before returning home to farm. He eventually met his future wife, Norma Northrup, who grew up on a farm served by Intercounty Electric east of Letcher on Highway 37.

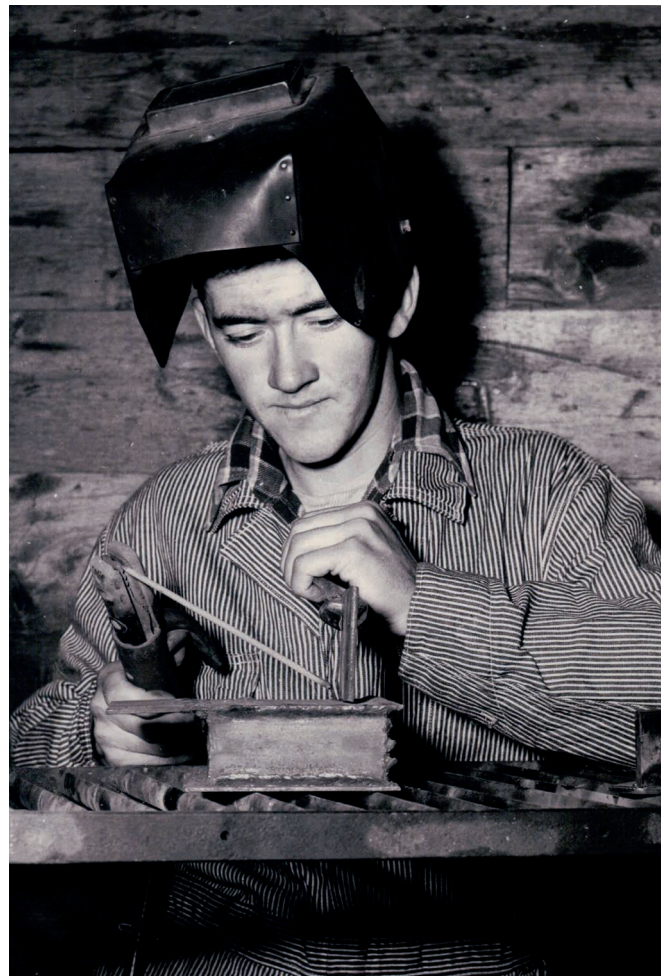
Robert and Norma grew crops and raised cattle on the Moe homestead for more than 25 years. They spent 32 winter seasons in south Texas and traveled around in an RV in the summer for 18 years before eventually moving to Mitchell.

Robert remembers, "Having a yard light was a handy new luxury when we first got electricity, but it got even better later when Intercounty offered a free all-night light if wired through the meter."

Norma said, "It's amazing to look at all that's changed with electric appliances. Refrigerators, deep freezers, water heaters, and washing machines."

However, Norma explained, one of the more profound impacts of electricity was how it would shape their children's lives. Their two sons, Kevin and Keith, both have successful careers related to computer technology, a field that would not exist without electricity.

Intercounty Electric merged with Tri-County Electric in 2000 to form Central Electric Cooperative, which today serves mostly rural portions of Aurora, Brule, Buffalo, Davison, Hanson, Jerauld, Miner and Sanborn Counties.





*Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey*

# Mammoth Discovery

**Shannon Marvel**

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

Over Memorial Day of 2023, a coal miner made a historic discovery at the Freedom Mine in North Dakota.

“The shovel operator just happened to take a scoop that had a complete mammoth tusk,” said Jeff Person, a paleontologist with the North Dakota Geological Survey.

“The tusk was about seven-foot-long. That shovel must’ve picked it up just perfectly to not damage or break it. The driver reported the find to his superiors at the Freedom Mine, who then contacted us,” Person said.

The tusk was found in an old streambed. Other fossils



*Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey*



were found in the streambed, including “more than twenty bones from the skeleton, including ribs, a shoulder blade a tooth and parts of the hips,” according to a news release.

“Most of the mammoth fossils known from North Dakota are isolated bones and teeth,” stated Clint Boyd, Senior Paleontologist for the North Dakota Geological Survey, in the news release. “This specimen is one of the most complete mammoth skeletons discovered in North Dakota, making it an exciting and scientifically important discovery.”

The bones were sent off to the Paleontology Lab at the North Dakota Heritage Center and State Museum in Bismarck to undergo extensive cleaning before being prepped to be dried out, which requires that the bones be

wrapped in plastic.

It could take up to another year for the bones to be dried out enough to be taken out of the plastic wrap, Person said.

At that point, the bones will be the focus of scientific research, he said.

According to the news release, “mammoths lived in North Dakota during the Pleistocene Epoch, commonly called the Ice Age, and went extinct in this area around 10,000 years ago. Several species of mammoth lived in North America, including the Woolly Mammoth and the Columbian Mammoth. They lived alongside other iconic animals like saber-toothed tigers and giant sloths. Once the bones are fully cleaned, paleontologists will be able to identify which species was collected from the mine.”



*Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey*

# COMMUNICATIONS



**JJ Martin**

Member Services  
and IT Director

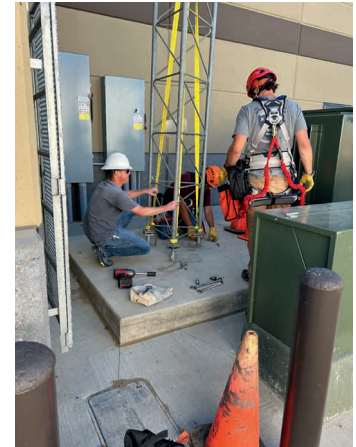
us. They handle much of the big picture stuff, a lot of which is over my head (literally and figuratively).

At the end of June, the finishing touches were applied to our new headquarters building. Our network and server room was transferred from the 80-year-old former Ford dealership building that MGE called home for over 70 years. Along with that, our communications tower was moved over via crane.

Once again, I must give a huge shoutout to Rushmore Electric and Rushmore Communications for all the work they have done, are doing, and will continue to do for

constant communications with National Information Solutions Cooperative, the software group that allows us to digitally record usage, bills, applications, and anything else that happens between individual members and the co-op. Without our server room up-and-running, we can't do our job of serving our member-owners.

Our communications tower connects us to the line crew. It is imperative that they can work safely, and the first step toward that goal is clear and open communication. When working with electricity, we all need to be on the same page, and our tower helps us make sure that the linemen make it home safely every day.



Eric, Derrick, and Andy bolt the tower to the new base



Eric and Andy of Rushmore Communications removing antennae and cables from the tower.

Capital City Construction also deserves a thank you for providing the crane and the particularly adept operator. I planned to take way more pictures of the tower moving process, but he had it moved before I realized he had even started!

Our server room connects us to the world. Our communication with substations and meters starts there. That is where we keep our finger on the pulse of our service area. We are also in



The operator deftly swung the tower from the old base to the new.



Eric and Andy mount antennae back onto the tower.

Communication between the co-op and members is also important. Now is a great time to make sure that we are all on the same page, too! Call in and make sure that we have up-to-date contact information, including phone numbers, emails, and mailing addresses. If you haven't signed up for SmartHub, now is as good a time as any to call and get connected. If you already have signed up for SmartHub, call in and see how to get text message notifications along with your email notifications. If you have multiple meters on your account, call and we can change or add meter descriptions to streamline outage calls or service changes. Along with that, if you're experiencing an outage, please call it in right away. The more information we have, the easier it is for us to determine the cause and restore power to all members affected as quickly and safely as possible.

# Ice Cream Socials Please Join Us!

During July and August, directors and staff have the opportunity to join with other businesses at local appreciation days and celebrations. Please plan to join us at one of these events.

### Upcoming Dates:

- Thursday, July 25 at the tent in Timber Lake during TLRA supper
- Saturday, Aug 3 in Isabel Pavilion after the parade
- Saturday, Aug. 10 in Corson County Fair Building in McIntosh



Thanks to 1st Financial Bank of Dupree for having us serve ice cream!

# FALL WORK UPDATE

Moreau-Grand Electric wants to remind our members that if you are planning any work that you want completed by fall, please let us know as soon as possible.

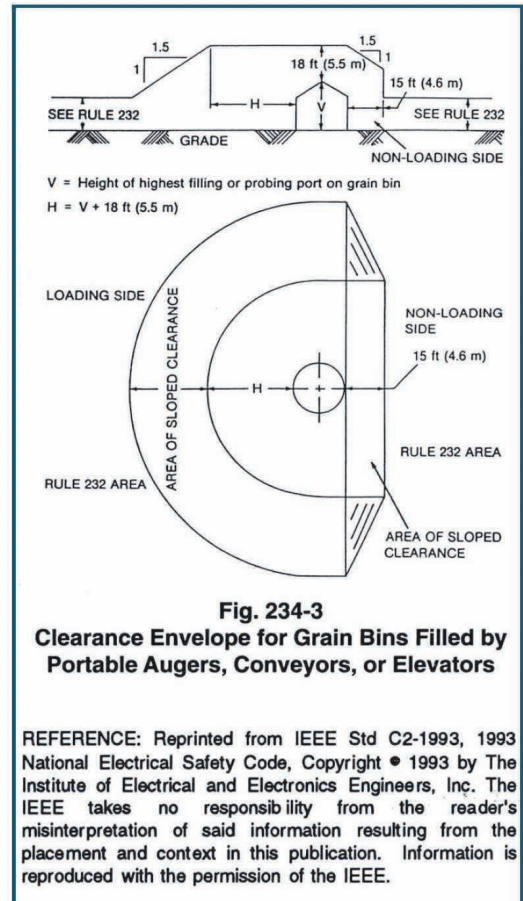
**Table 1**

Height of Grain Storage Structure	D= Minimum Distance From Line* To Bin Wall
15 feet	55 feet
20	68
25	80
30	93
35	104
40	118
50	143
60	168
70	193
80	218

\*Based on a typical power line having a vertical clearance of 18.5 feet above the ground and a supply line phase to ground voltage of more than 750V to 22KV; National Electrical Safety Code Rule 232.

Due to supply chain issues since the pandemic, delays can occur while getting your projects completed when you need them.

Projects such as new grain bins, new houses or new outbuildings require some planning. For anyone planning a new grain bin, please keep overhead power lines in mind. Be sure you allow enough room for tall augers used during filling and unloading times. Stay as far away from power lines as possible and reference the tables shown when locating your new or reconstructed bins.





# A GOLDEN HARVEST

## The Buzz Behind Adee Honey Farms

**Frank Turner**

[frank.turner@sdrea.coop](mailto:frank.turner@sdrea.coop)

Three generations ago, the Adee family learned that a tumultuous time can lead to significant opportunity. During the 1930s, the Great Depression wreaked havoc on small rural communities and the agricultural industry. The value of crops and livestock plummeted, and the land became arid.

These hard times impacted many in the Midwest, including Vernon Adee, a rural teacher and rancher in Nebraska. Vernon needed a new way to provide for his family, and a letter from his brother held the answer: “I can’t sell chickens or hogs, but I’m doing well with honey. Be advised: Get a beehive.”

Following his brother’s advice, Vernon attended a foreclosure auction and purchased his first beehive. The decision to begin

beekeeping would inspire several more generations of the Adee family to continue in the trade.

Wanting to start their own operation, Vernon’s sons, Richard and Stanley, purchased a retiring beekeeper’s business through a trade magazine advertisement in 1957. Located in Bruce, South Dakota, the business included 1,500 hives and a breeding yard in Woodville, Mississippi. The acquisition marked the beginning of Adee Honey Farms, and what began as a small family farm quickly grew into the largest beekeeping operation in the country. Today, Adee Honey Farms supports more than 80,000 colonies and nearly 70 full-time employees.

“It started with survival and eventually became a family business,” said Bret Adee, Vernon’s grandson and the owner-operator of Adee Honey Farms. “I can remember being four or five years old and being in the field with my dad, holding the smoker and helping where I could. By the time I was in elementary school, I was loading trucks and moving boxes in the warehouse. Like anyone who grew up on a farm, I was involved in the family business by the time I could walk.”

From a young age, Bret has held a deep love and appreciation for the honey bee. The insect’s ability to cooperate and produce golden treasure while benefiting plants, crops, and the ecosystem at large makes them a unique livestock, unlike any other.

“To watch a hive grow and forage, and by the end of the summer make up to 150 pounds of honey – it’s just so exciting,”

said Bret. “It’s the dynamics of the biology that keeps it interesting.”

Right now, Adee Honey Farms is engaged in honey production in the Midwest, with their bees spread across South Dakota and the west edge of Minnesota and the south edge of North Dakota. Around the first week of August, Bret’s business will start the honey harvest, an event that can last until the first frost or even longer. For now, Bret said this year is shaping up to be a good season for honey production.

“It’s early, but I’m optimistic. The years when there is a lot of clover are the years that beekeepers do well,” said Bret. “We had a wet enough fall that enough clover germinated. We can always lose that to a hot dry wind... but we are optimistic right now.”

But bees aren’t just used to make honey; they also have hand in pollinating crops across the country. More than a neat fact, it’s also the second half of the beekeeping industry. The mere presence of honey bees can increase yields for crops such as alfalfa and sunflowers by up to 20 to 30 percent, depending on the variety of crop. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, pollination is responsible for more than \$18 billion in added revenue to crop production in the country.

Once the honey harvest is over, the bees will be loaded onto a truck to tour the country, traveling from the Dakotas to California and later to Texas in search of favorable weather and crops to pollinate. In fact, crop yields from California almond trees and apple trees are almost totally dependent on pollination from bees, enticing farmers from across the country to welcome

bees onto their land. Everyone benefits – even bees.

“It’s a win for the consumer who gets to eat the honey. It’s a win for the landowner who has the bees on his land, and if everything goes right, it’s good for the beekeeper’s family too,” said Bret.



Bret Adee, owner-operator of Adee Honey Farms, is a third-generation beekeeper in the Adee family. Photos courtesy of Adee Honey Farms.



## FOOD TRUCKS



*Photos Courtesy of Karli Hinds*

# Food Trucks

## How Karli Hinds Jumped Into the Business

**Shannon Marvel**

shannon.marvel@sdea.coop

Karli Hinds was working a typical corporate 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. job when she realized she wanted a life where she had the flexibility to travel with her husband.

“So I had actually quit my job and stayed home for six months or so,” Hinds said. “Then I wanted something I could do but still have the flexibility to travel.”

Hinds had a couple ideas, one that had to do with the fact that she’s a “foodie.”

“I started cooking really young. I would say I was making meals by myself when I was in middle school,” she said.

The idea for opening a food truck was at the forefront of her mind, given that she was not interested in having a storefront.

“I didn’t want the hassle and responsibility of it. I wanted a business I could rely on myself and not have to rely on several employees,” Hinds said.



**“On my second day in the food truck, I was serving Tex Mex, and I had a crazy line. It was just insane. I wanted to quit right then, but I also was thinking, ‘this is going to work.’ It was a good turnout, and it was only my second day.”**

**- Karli Hinds**

Financially, there are pros and cons to starting up a food truck business.

Hinds said there’s limited finance options for food trucks while at the same time, there’s more cash that you must have on hand to get started.

Finding a food truck or trailer was the next challenge and proved to be fairly difficult for Hinds at first.

“We wanted one that was brand new,” Hinds said. “Most of the manufacturers are out of Mexico, and they don’t always have the best reputations. We really struggled with finding a reputable company to build a trailer with me. Somehow, we found a random post on Facebook from a guy that was selling brand new food trailers somewhere in the middle of nowhere in Iowa.”

Hinds and her husband walked through the trailers and picked out what they liked and didn’t like before finally deciding on the one to get.

Hinds uses the food truck to cook up an array of menu items every week.

“I’m actually a really picky eater, believe it or not,” Hinds said. “I didn’t want to specialize in one thing. People in small towns know we get kind of burnt out from eating the same thing over and over.”

Hinds rotates between eight or so different food themes.

“Once in a while I come

up with something new to add within that theme,” Hinds said. “My best seller is always my smash burgers.”

She’ll find her recipes on the popular social media app, Tik Toc.

On her second day of business, Hinds knew her food truck business would be sustainable.

“On my second day in the food truck, I was serving Tex Mex, and I had a crazy line,” Hinds said. It was just insane. I wanted to quit right then, but I also was thinking, ‘this is going to work.’ It was a good turnout, and it was only my second day.”

Hinds said the job isn’t always fun and is physically demanding.

“The hours are a lot more chaotic,” she said. “The problem-solving aspect is better as I don’t have a chain of command that I need to go through to make things right with the customer.”

During the winter months, Hinds delivers lunches a couple days out of the week.

“It’s just one item and I deliver them in town within Vermillion,” Hinds said. “That’s just something that I do that’s a little bit different than other food trucks.”



## REGISTER TO WIN!

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

Your Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Your E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_



**AUG. 2-11**  
**Sturgis Motorcycle Rally**  
Sturgis, SD  
[www.sturgismotorcyclerrally.com](http://www.sturgismotorcyclerrally.com)

**AUG. 18**  
**Arlington Car Show**  
Arlington, SD  
605-203-0728

**AUG. 20-22**  
**Dakotafest**  
Mitchell, SD

**AUG. 22**  
**61st Annual Steam Threshing Jamboree**  
Prairie Village  
Madison, SD

**AUG. 28 - SEPT. 2**  
**South Dakota State Fair**  
7 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
State Fairgrounds  
Huron, SD  
[www.SDStateFair.com](http://www.SDStateFair.com)

**SEPT. 8**  
**Homesteader Day**  
1-4 p.m.  
Beaver Creek Nature Area  
Valley Springs, SD

**SEPT. 14-15**  
**2024 Kuchen & Harvest Festival**  
Delmont, SD

**SEPT. 17**  
**EV Expo**  
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds  
Sioux Falls, SD

**OCT. 17**  
**Co-op Month Celebration**  
Cherry Rock Farms  
Brandon, SD

**AUG. 2-4**  
**Arlington Days**  
Arlington, SD  
605-690-5717  
Follow Arlington Days, South Dakota on Facebook & Instagram

**AUG. 3**  
**Prairie Fest**  
Armour, SD

**AUG. 3**  
**Bloomin' Quilt Party**  
12-5 p.m.  
Bennett Barn  
Aurora, SD  
605-690-3246

**AUG. 6-8**  
**IDEAg's Farmfest**  
8 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Redwood County, MN  
651-316-4369

**AUG. 7**  
**Ag Appreciation Day**  
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds  
Sioux Falls, SD

**AUG. 10**  
**Perseid Meteor Shower**  
Palisades State Park  
Garretson, SD

**AUG. 10**  
**Camaro Fun Days**  
10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.  
Pioneer Park  
Brookings, SD

**AUG. 10-11**  
**Fur Trader Days**  
Geddes, SD  
605-680-2160

**AUG. 17**  
**6th Annual Black Hills Super 6 Mountain Bike Race**  
3 hour race, 10 a.m.  
6 hour race, 8 a.m.  
Northern Hills Area CASA  
Spearfish, 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.**