

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

Let's Go Fly a Kite

**Brookings Kite Festival
Creates Excitement**
Pages 8-9

Cooperative Metering
Pages 12-13

Photo Credit: Visit Brookings

Consider Safety and Do Not Post Items on Utility Poles



Kelly Brandlee
Communications
Director

We have all seen or hung posters advertising a garage sale or community event on utility poles. While it may seem harmless, it can be dangerous.

Utility workers often do maintenance around these power lines that carry 7,200 or more volts of electricity. Foreign objects such as staples or nails embedded in the pole can lead to the utility worker snagging or getting a hole in their gloves. Those gloves are meant to insulate workers from high voltage and protect them from being electrocuted.

There's also a public safety risk that comes with posting signs and other items on utility poles. Nails, staples, and other materials put into wooden utility poles can cause poles to deteriorate more quickly. This can reduce their structural integrity and stability, increasing the risk for the pole to fall over when struck by a vehicle.

According to Safeelectricity.org, hunting stands, and basketball hoops are items that have been found attached to utility poles. It

is hazardous for utility workers, yourself, and anyone who uses these items. Keep as much distance between yourself and overhead power lines when doing any outdoor activity. A trend Northern Electric crews have noticed recently is increased security cameras attached to utility poles. This is not only a hazard for utility crews but also for the camera installer, and under no circumstance should they be attached to utility poles.

Keep yourself and those in your community safe by not posting or hanging anything on utility poles. Northern Electric will remove those items to keep our employees and the public safe.

Another tip Northern Electric crews would like homeowners to consider is the placement of their residential fences and other more permanent items near electric poles. Homeowners should build fences at least 10 feet away from electrical equipment to allow safe access for utility workers.

For more information on staying safe around power lines, utility poles, and electricity, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Because it's **NOT** just a green box. It's a pad-mounted transformer attached to underground power lines. It makes electricity useable for your home. Be cautious! **DO NOT** touch, sit, play or dig around it. If you see a green box that is damaged or open, call your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative to report it.

RE-ENERGIZING SAFETY

Your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative wants you to be safe. For more safety tips, go to yourcooppower.com.



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

NORTHERN ELECTRIC

(USPS 396-040)

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Northern Electric Cooperative Connections is the monthly publication for the members of Northern Electric Cooperative, PO Box 457, Bath, SD 57427. Families subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. The purpose of Northern Electric Cooperative Connections is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on electric cooperative matters and better rural living.

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**Northern Electric
Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



Northern Electric Cooperative's regular board meeting was held May 23, 2024, at the headquarters in Bath with all directors present or via teleconference except Scott Sperry. As the first order of business, the board approved the April 26, 2024, minutes, & April expenditures. The board then reviewed & accepted monthly reports by management. East River Director Kirk Schaunaman reported on actions taken by the East River Board at the May 2, 2024 meeting. No South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) report was given. The next SDREA Board Meeting will be held June 27-28, 2024.

MANAGER'S REPORT

General Manager Char Hager's report included the following items:

- Update on the Rural Electric Economic Development (REED) Board Meeting held on May 1, 2024.
- Report on the East River MAC Meeting held on May 1, 2024.
- Informed the board of meeting with the City of Hecla scheduled for June 5, 2024.
- Informed the board that Aberdeen Development Corporation CEO, Michael Bockorny announced he will leave the ADC at the end of 2024.
- Reported on a video conference meeting with RUS Director of Environmental and Historical Preservation, Joe Ranson regarding changes to the environmental process

for construction work orders.

BOARD REPORT

The board considered and/or acted upon the following:

- Approved the date and time of the next regular board meeting for 8:30 A.M. on Friday, June 21, 2024
- Approved Work Order Inventory #24-04 for \$334,594.56 to be submitted to the RUS for reimbursement from loan funds for electric plant construction already completed.
- Reviewed the East River 2024 Capital Credit Retirement.
- Reviewed and approved changes to Tariff Rules and Regulations Sections 10-13.
- Approved changes to policy GP-16 Retirement of capital credits.
- Appointed Kirk Schaunaman as delegate for Basin Electric Caucus to be held on June 6, 2024.
- Director Mike Traxinger reported on the activities of the policy committee.
- Director Todd Hettich gave a building committee update.
- Rural Electric Supply Cooperative (RESCO) CEO Matt Brandrup presented updates on RESCO and utility industry supply chain issues
- Held executive session.

Talk to your director or co-op manager if you have questions on these matters.

FINANCIAL REPORT

	April-24	April-23
kWh Sales	22,422,549 kWh	22,534,635 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$2,252,928	\$2,166,583
Total Cost of Service	\$2,280,551	\$2,214,271
Operating Margins.....	-\$27,623	-\$47,688
Year to Date Margins	-\$86,633	\$259,265

RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE MONTHLY USAGE AND BILL

APRIL 2024.....	1,779 kWh.....	\$198.34.....	0.1115 per kWh
APRIL 2023.....	2,086 kWh.....	\$226.24.....	0.1085 per kWh

Wholesale power cost, taxes, interest, and depreciation account for 83.5% of NEC's total cost of service.

Fireworks Safety

Summer is synonymous with barbecues, parades and fireworks. The National Safety Council advises everyone to enjoy fireworks at public displays conducted by professionals, and not to use any fireworks at home. They may be legal but they are not safe.

Every year, thousands of people are injured badly enough to require medical treatment after fireworks-related incidents, with many of the injuries to children and young adults. While the majority of these incidents are due to amateurs attempting to use professional-grade, home-made or other illegal fireworks or explosives, less powerful devices like small firecrackers and sparklers can also cause significant injury.

Additionally, fireworks start an average of 19,000 fires each year.

Fireworks Safety Tips: If You Choose to Use Legal Fireworks

If consumer fireworks are legal to buy where you live and you choose to use them, be sure to follow the following safety tips:

- Never allow young children to handle fireworks
- Older children should use them only under close adult supervision
- Never use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol
- Anyone using fireworks or standing nearby should wear protective eyewear
- Never hold lighted fireworks in your hands
- Never light them indoors
- Only use them away from people, houses and flammable material
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person
- Only light one device at a time and maintain a safe distance after lighting
- Never ignite devices in a container
- Do not try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks
- Soak both spent and unused fireworks in water for a few hours before discarding
- Keep a bucket of water nearby to fully extinguish fireworks that don't go off or in case of fire
- Never use illegal fireworks

Better yet, grab a blanket and a patch of lawn, kick back and let the experts handle the fireworks show.

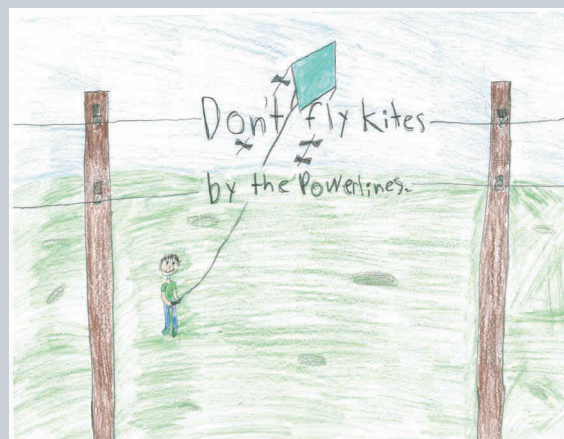
Sparklers Are Dangerous

Every year, young children can be found along parade routes and at festivals with sparklers in hand, but sparklers are a lot more dangerous than most people think.

Sparklers burn at about 2,000 degrees – hot enough to melt some metals. Sparklers can quickly ignite clothing, and children have received severe burns from dropping sparklers on their feet. According to the National Fire Protection Association, sparklers alone account for more than 25% of emergency room visits for fireworks injuries. For children under five years of age, sparklers accounted for nearly half of the total estimated injuries.

Consider using safer alternatives, such as glow sticks, confetti poppers or colored streamers.

Source: National Safety Council



**“Let’s Go Fly a Kite Up to
the Highest Heights.”**

Eldon Femrite, Age 12

Eldon Femrite warns readers to not fly kites by power lines this summer. Eldon’s parents are Jody and Rosemary Femrite, members of Codington-Clark Electric.

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 Desserts

NO CHURN ICE CREAM

Ingredients:

2 cups heavy cream
14 oz. sweetened condensed milk
Other mix-ins as desired

Method

In a mixing bowl, whip heavy cream until stiff peaks form.

Mix in sweetened condensed milk and any flavors/mix-ins you like (strawberries, Oreos, lemon, vanilla extract, etc.).

Pour into loaf pan and freeze until solid (2+ hours).

Kayla Beaner
Centerville, S.D.

CINNAMON PECAN PIE

Ingredients:

1 refrigerated pie crust, (from 14.1-oz. pkg.)
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 cup light corn syrup
2 tbsps. butter, melted
1 tbsp. cinnamon extract
1 1/2 cups pecan pieces

Method

Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare pie crust as directed on package for one-crust pie using 9-inch pie plate.

Mix eggs, sugar, corn syrup, butter and cinnamon flavor in large bowl until well blended. Stir in pecans.

Pour into crust. Bake 50 to 55 minutes or until knife inserted halfway between center and edge comes out clean. Cool completely on wire rack.

McCormick.com

RHUBARB PIE

Ingredients:

Crust

1-2 cups flour
1/2 stick butter or margarine
1/4 cup water

Pie

3 tbsps. butter or margarine
1 cup sugar
3 eggs, separated
2 tbsps. flour
1/2 tsp. salt
2 1/2 cups cut rhubarb
Smucker's caramel sundae syrup

Method

Crust: Add ingredients and knead to complete pie crust. Amounts will vary due to humidity. Knead dough into pie pan and poke holes into the bottom as needed. You may make creative edges as you wish, however it is not necessary.

Pie: Soften butter or margarine and stir together with the sugar, egg yolks, flour, and salt. Beat egg whites until stiff. Add rhubarb and fold in the egg whites. Add the filling to the 8-inch, unbaked pie crust. You may add a drizzle of Smucker's sundae syrup for additional flavoring before baking. Bake in oven set at 400 until golden brown. You may also add more caramel syrup to pie after baking for ultimate effect.

Lisa Kummer Soukup
Tea, S.D.

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.

Member Appreciation

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

During the
Spink County Achievement Days




Thursday, August 1
7:00am - 9:30am

Spink County Fairgrounds
Redfield, SD

**This event is FREE and
open to the public.**



**Northern
Electric
Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Gretchen Sharp and Troy McQuillen Named as Northern Electric Cooperative Finalists in Regional “Who Powers You Contest.”

Kelly Brandlee

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The Who Powers You contest, hosted by the region’s Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, celebrates local figures who are making a difference in their communities. The 2024 Northern Electric Cooperative nominees certainly qualify as they are making a difference and impact in their communities.

Gretchen Sharp believes in helping her community and youth by volunteering. This selfless dedication earned her recognition as a Northern Electric finalist in the third annual regional “Who Powers You contest.” “Gretchen is heavily involved in her local community, going above and beyond, helping by volunteering with FFA, 4-H, church bible study, the dairy program at the Brown County Fair, playing in the community band, symphony, orchestra, and school events. In addition, Gretchen has managed the SD FFA Foundation finances for over two decades, volunteering many hours of labor and expertise far beyond the minimal hours/month she is paid,” wrote Gerri Eide, who nominated Gretchen for the contest. In addition, Gretchen was instrumental in making the SD FFA Foundation visible and recognized as a non-profit. Gretchen is the Director of the Aberdeen Area Schools Foundation and has created many exciting events to engage current students, staff, and alumni.



Gretchen Sharp pictured with Northern Electric Cooperative General Manager Char Hager.



Troy McQuillen receives a certificate of recognition from Northern Electric Cooperative General Manager Char Hager.

Troy McQuillen was the second nominee from the Northern Electric region. Troy has a passion for the history of the Aberdeen community and a vision for the future. “Troy is the go-to expert for historical information and is passionate about saving historic assets,” states Lisa Anderson, who nominated Troy for the contest. Troy has a long list of organizations he helps through his volunteer spirit and community-driven mentality, such as the Aberdeen Downtown Association, South Dakota Film Festival, and KO Lee Aberdeen Public Library. In addition, Troy launched and organized the Aberdeen Magazine and Aberdeen Insider newspaper, both of which are incredible assets to Aberdeen and surrounding communities. “Troy is a small business owner and community-minded professional who looks for gaps and finds a way to fill the community’s needs,” says Lisa.

Member owners, employees, and citizens who live or work within the service territory of the region’s Touchstone Energy Cooperatives were eligible to be nominated for the Who Powers You contest. Weekly finalists were announced and featured on Keloland Living.

Gretchen’s story was featured on Keloland Living on April 25, 2024, and Troy’s story aired on Thursday, May 16. A recap of the segment is also available on the contest’s webpage at WhoPowersYouContest.com.

KITE FESTIVAL



Photo Credit: Visit Brookings

Let's Go Fly a Kite

Shannon Marvel

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The sky becomes more of an art canvas during the Brookings Kite Festival. For the last 25 years, kite fliers from across the country gather to let their art take flight at the festival.

One of those artists is Mike Gee of North Dakota.

"We go down there to Brookings and really like the kite flying field there. It's just nice to come down and fly kites with friends who also enjoy flying kites," Gee said.

Gee flies what's called "show kites", which are big, inflatable kites that can span 20 feet across the sky.

There are other kites flown during the festival, including soft kites, stick kites and sport kites.

A sport kite is one that is attached to two or four lines. Often they'll be flown in teams and perform maneuvers in the sky.

"If you talk about crazy kites, there's a wide variety. There are so many different creative people building things in creative ways," Gee said. "It is definitely an art. It's what you put on the canvas that makes it special."

The kites are typically made with nylon, sail making cloth that doesn't stretch.

"You can't just go to the fabric store and buy tent fabric. We have a couple different weights of fabrics we use. And you need that tail on there to keep the kite stable," Gee said.

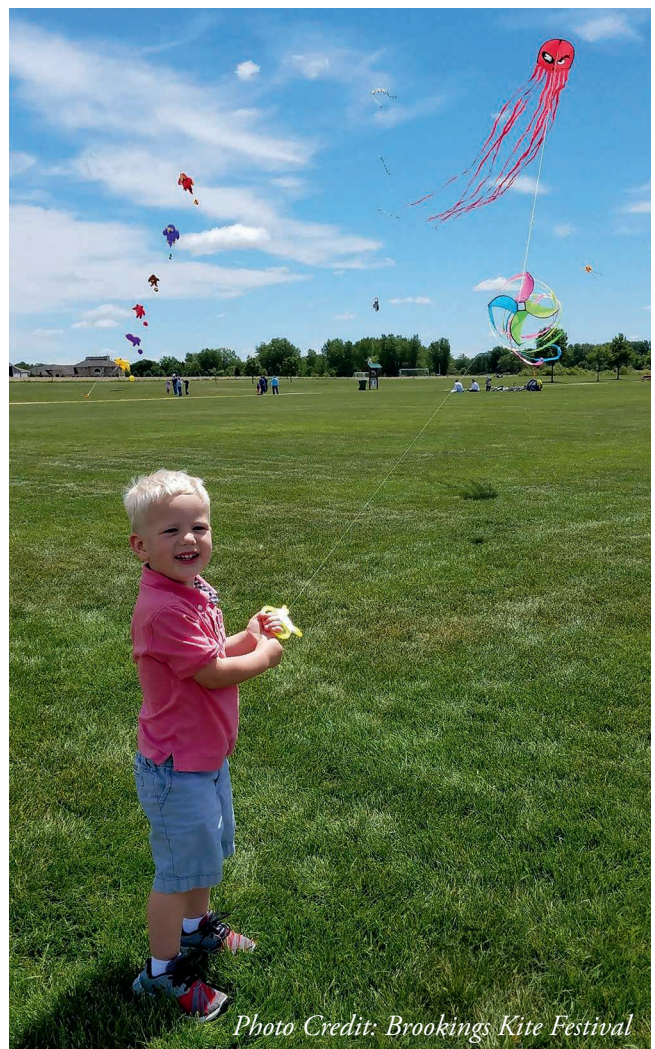


Photo Credit: Brookings Kite Festival



Photo Credit: Brookings Register

Sally Damm Norby, of the Brookings Optimists Club, said the festival got its start when Lynn Versher, former director of the South Dakota Art Museum, approached Optimist member Bill Flynn about creating a joint effort to bring big kites to Brookings.

“This volunteer organization aims to make a positive impact on the lives of youth and communities. The Brookings club’s primary focus is on advancing the opportunities and programs for youth events that are encouraging with exceptional supportive outcomes. The Brookings Optimist Kite Festival offers a comprehensive learning experience that incorporates expressions of culture, science, creativity, civic involvement, and is

environmentally friendly,” Norby said.

Youth are encouraged to come down and learn how to make a kite of their own, with professional guidance.

Gee said he encourages visitors to come up to kite fliers to ask questions or strike up a conversation.

“One thing I really like about kite flying is it seems like no matter who you talk to on the field, someone can relate to an experience of flying a kite,” Gee said. “When we start flying kites, it brings back memories of when other folks were kids flying kites. It’s kind of emotional for some people.”

This year’s event will take place on June 22-23 at the Fishback Soccer Park in Brookings.

Gee said this location is a safe spot to fly kites, and well away from any electrical line hazards.

“If you’ve flown kites long enough, you have a story about power lines. When you hit a line, you call the power company, and they advise you of what to do. The best thing to do is avoid those wires. I always think, ‘If my line breaks, which way is my kite going to go and what’s over there,’” Gee said.

Gee encourages visitors to come down to the Brookings Kite Festival with their lawn chairs and blankets and stay for more than just a half hour.

“The thing is when the wind changes direction or speed, the kites change. There’s just so much going on throughout the day. You’ve really got to sit back and pay attention,” Gee said.



Photo Credit: Visit Brookings



Northern Electric Members grow their greenhouse venture.

Kelly Brandlee

kbrandlee@northernelectric.coop

Andrew and Justine West's journey into vegetable farm ownership began with a simple fenced garden. Soon that garden grew to include two greenhouses thanks to a big idea. "We were looking for an opportunity to do something on our land that we both

would enjoy and could bring in additional income," stated Justine. "In 2019, pre-COVID, there were few greenhouses or local produce sellers in our area," she continued. Seeing an opportunity, Andrew and Justine decided to expand their garden into a full-scale operation. With a greenhouse kit and some plastic, they set out to utilize their land to generate additional income.

The couple are self-taught experts and students of YouTube. In the early days of their business, they

did a lot of internet research and learned through trial and error to figure out the best growing process for them. They started small but now grow a variety of vegetables including tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, peppers, onions, squash, peas, beans, zucchini, and eggplant. The couple also raise flowers for hanging baskets, plant starts, and herbal baskets. Andrew and Justine continually look for the next product they believe their customers will enjoy. This entrepreneurial spirit has them venturing into new products like hot sauce (coming next year), which involves plenty of preparation and planning to adhere to cottage food laws and to make the desired product. Their

venture continues to grow as the couple experiments with a growing inventory of produce and other products raised at their acreage outside of Stratford.

West Acres Garden is also home to around 40 chickens, contributing to their composting efforts and egg production. The couple have an innovative approach to growing their produce which includes capturing rainwater from the roof of their greenhouses to irrigate plants via a drip system and composting their own chicken waste to enrich their soil.

Planting begins March 1st each year. From then on throughout the year the couple is busy maintaining the plants at the greenhouse, caring for their chickens, and selling their product. A lot of hard work, and heart goes into ensuring a safe and quality product for West Acres Garden's customers. The couple believes in what they are doing and that the reward far outweighs the hard work associated with selling their produce. For Andrew, the most rewarding aspect is the customer interaction. "I like having a good product and meeting with customers who are excited to eat our produce. It is a lot of work growing food, but those enthusiastic customers at the farmers market make it worth it", he says.

Justine finds joy in the process. "It is rewarding to grow our own food and use our composting and rainwater collection systems. I enjoy growing our food verses thinking it just shows up in the store. We get to experience and appreciate the process," she says.

"It is alot of work growing food; but those enthusiastic customers at the farmers market make it worth it," says Andrew.

For Andrew and Justine, growing vegetables is not just about producing food. It is about building a lifestyle and community around fresh, local produce.

West Acres Garden can be found at the Malchow Plaza Farmers Market downtown Aberdeen every Saturday from May-September. Visitors to the Main Street location can shop local products from 8:30am-noon. Those interested in purchasing from West Acres can also message the couple on Facebook at West Acres Garden.



Plants growing in one of two green houses at West Acres Garden.



Chickens at West Acres Garden contribute to the success of vegetable and plant growing with the use of their manure in composting piles at the garden.

COOPERATIVE METERING

Roger Lawien

More than 40 cooperative linemen and metering specialists gathered in Pierre for South Dakota Rural Electric's Meter School. This two-day gathering offers the opportunity to enhance skills, build a community of professionals, and learn the nuances of metering. As our need for more energy continues to grow, so does how we properly meter consumption.

Modern electric meters do much more than keep track of the electricity we consume. Correct electric metering is also essential for grid reliability and stability. Accurate measurements aid your cooperative in identifying and addressing issues such as voltage fluctuations or load imbalances promptly.

This proactive approach enhances the resilience of the electrical grid, reducing the likelihood of outages and ensuring a continuous and reliable power supply. At its core, accurate metering ensures fair and precise billing, preventing financial disputes and establishing trust between cooperatives and members.

From an economic standpoint, correct electric metering plays a pivotal role in resource allocation allowing member owned cooperatives to better understand consumption patterns, enabling them to optimize energy distribution and invest strategically in infrastructure development. This, in turn, leads to more efficient operations, cost savings, and improved overall service quality.

Precise metering supports energy conservation.

Members can sign into their account online, view consumption. Armed with accurate usage data they are empowered to make informed decisions about their energy consumption. This encourages responsible energy usage practices, reducing waste and lowering overall demand.

Metering guru and instructor John Pollard said it best. "These training schools are important. Metering is a craft handed down from generation to generation. With the advances of solid-state metering, these students are the supreme candidates to lead us into the future."

Your electric cooperative is your partner in getting it done!



2023 SDREA Meter School Instructors Photo by Roger Lawien

What is a Smart Meter?

A smart meter is a common term for Automated Metering Infrastructure, or AMI. These are connected devices that transmit information back to the electric utility's meter data management system and the information collected is used primarily for billing and outage response purposes. Smart meters started to be installed about 25 years ago. Individual utilities have different aged systems, but all electric cooperatives in South Dakota have two-way communication with every meter in the system.

What advantages do Smart Meters bring?

Before smart meters were installed, customers were required to read their own analog meter and report their monthly usage for billing purposes, or a utility employee would physically travel to every home, farm or business in their large service territories to read usage data. Smart Meters take the burden off customers and employees, saving time and money for all consumers. In some cases, the aggregated energy usage information from their home can be visible to the customer via the Internet or a phone application.

- Smart Meters can be used to pinpoint exact locations of power outages more quickly by transmitting an “out of power” notification, meaning a faster response time to outages.
- Smart Meters allow information to be shared with individual consumers about their energy usage – allowing them to find energy efficiency opportunities or potential problems in their home.
- Smart Meters improve electric service reliability and power quality. Information obtained from the automated meters often identifies problems that can be repaired before they cause an outage.
- Information can be used by engineers to more effectively and appropriately size lines and transformers, saving the cooperative and members money.

What information does a Smart Meter record?

Automated meters record an electronic kilowatt-hour (kWh) reading, the date and time of energy usage, the overall peak demand of the electric account, if the meter has been tampered with, and the number of times the meter has experienced a loss of power.

Security of information

Electric cooperatives do not sell or share consumer data. Cooperatives abide by all laws regarding the privacy, protection and disclosure of personal information. The meters and associated communications systems are equipped with security features to prevent unauthorized access.

Are there potential health impacts from a smart meter?

Research conducted by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), the Utilities Telecom Council (UTC) and other similar groups have shown no health impacts from automated meters. The radio frequencies emitted by digital meters are well below the maximum recommended in federal guidelines. A digital meter equipped to send and receive data has an RF density hundreds of times lower than the RF density of a cell phone, and the meters are installed on the outside of homes or buildings.



Paddling to the Arctic

The Legacy of Dick Davidson and the South Dakota Canoe and Kayak Association

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

GOALS

To travel from South Dakota to the Arctic by canoe in one season. This is obviously no small challenge. If the season is giving, the added goals of reaching Alaska and even reaching both the Arctic Ocean (Beaufort Sea) and the Pacific Ocean (Bering Sea) would be added as noted later in 'Trip Segments'.

PARTY

A party of one in a solo canoe (at this time and likely during the trip).

GEAR

All gear will be carried at the start of the trip and only replacement gear (hopefully none) will be purchased in route. The gear must and will serve in all conditions of the trip, including weather ranging from hot, sultry days to possible blizzard conditions, including canoeing circumstances like numerous whitewater ascents and great lakes travel.

FOOD

Most food will be purchased in route. Resupply points will range from modern to basic. The incidence of points, after Lake Winnipeg, will range from several days to three or four weeks.

SUPPORT

None.

These are the original notes of outdoor activist and local canoe legend Dick Davidson, detailing his ambitious 1988 journey from South Dakota to the Arctic Circle by canoe. Embarking from Big Stone Lake, the 58-year-old from Sioux Falls attempted to paddle and portage his canoe 4,300 miles over several months through Canadian rivers and streams. Unfortunately, fires and drought in Manitoba prevented him from seeing reaching his goal. Even still, the ambitious journey captured Davidson's commitment to living a life dedicated to outdoor expeditions.

Davidson passed away in Sioux Falls in 2009, but his legacy and passion for canoeing live on through what is now known as the South Dakota Canoe and Kayak Association, a nonprofit

outdoor recreation organization he founded in 1981. Unlike his solo adventures through the Canadian wilderness, Davidson established the association alongside several co-founders, canoe enthusiasts, and friends, including founding member Dave Greenlee of Sioux Falls.

Although the group participated in races, canoe building, and conservation activism, Greenlee noted that the group mainly gathered mostly “for the sheer fun of canoeing.”

But they weren’t just enthusiasts, this group of committed canoers were fanatics, appealing to all types of canoers from time-tested adventurers like Davidson to the casual outdoor enthusiast. Many of the founding members of the club would look for any opportunity to canoe, even taking to streams in near-freezing temperatures.

“Sometimes in the early spring season when the ice was still out, we would check the rain gauges after a quick rain to see if there was enough flow to enable a quick opening run for our canoes over the ice,” said Greenlee.

Another founding member, Tom Behrend, recalled crafting his own canoes and paddles from scratch, often gifting his creations to friends and enthusiasts for just the cost of the supplies.

“I would hold a class every year on how to build a canoe,” said Behrend. “A group of 10 to 15 of our members would meet every Thursday night in the winter time in somebody’s heated garage. We would build these beautiful canoes with caned seats and all the goodies and then raffle them off once they were finished. It was a great way to raise money for the nonprofit.”

For the less devout, the association offered events catered to amateurs, offering downstream floats and river-bound birdwatches. Greenlee recalled organizing an introductory canoeing instructional for blind individuals. The experience, he said, was incredibly rewarding, both the participants and the instructor had something to learn.

“I had been asked a couple of times to lead a canoeing instructional for the Girl Scouts,” said Greenlee. “Then somebody said, ‘We have a group of individuals who are visually impaired who want to learn what canoeing is like.’ I was used to teaching young kids who just want to get out on the water and flail around and paddle, but this group was actually interested in learning about the canoe.”

Greenlee continued, “I remember taking one of the individuals out onto the water and saying ‘I’m going to turn to the left here and now we are facing West.’ He said, ‘I know that.’ So, I asked, ‘How do you know that?’ And he said, ‘I know the direction because I can feel the sun on my face.’ How many times had I been in a canoe, looking at the shore and landmarks, but I never realized that I could close my eyes and tell which direction I was going by feeling the sun on my face... He was teaching me.”

Today, the South Dakota Canoe and Kayak Association is still the state’s premier paddling group, promoting safety,



A photo from an old article in the Argus Leader highlighting the preparations of Davidson’s attempted 4,300 mile trip to the Arctic Circle by canoe.
Photo by Mike Roemer, circa 1988. Courtesy of the Argus Leader.

education, conservation, and paddling outdoors. With roughly 100 members from across the state, the association centers around amateur paddling events, safety and outreach. Recent safety efforts include entry-level canoeing lessons and the association’s recent WEAR IT campaign, which successfully installed more than 50 safety signs along recreation areas of the Missouri River encouraging kayakers and canoers to wear lifejackets.

“We host educational pool sessions across the state in Watertown and Sioux Falls where we practice falling out of the kayak and canoe and getting back in,” said Pat Wellner, the association’s current president. “It’s all about encouraging safe practices while enjoying the outdoors.”

Wellner encouraged outdoor enthusiasts of all levels to join the association by visiting the association’s website at sdcka.org.

“Having the lakes and rivers of South Dakota is a great way to see the state from a different perspective that many don’t get to see,” said Wellner. “If anyone is interested in becoming a member, I would encourage them to check out the website, and when you are on the water, please wear a life jacket.”

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. 24
2024 McCrossan Boys Ranch
Xtreme Event Rodeo
McCrossan Boys Ranch Campus
Sioux Falls, SD
605-339-1203

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.

JULY 1-4
Annual Black Hills Roundup
7 p.m.
Black Hills Roundup Grounds
Belle Fourche, SD
605-723-2010
blackhillsroundup.com

JULY 5-7, 12-14, 19-21
Laura Ingalls Wilder
Pageant
Prairie Girl: Laura's Dakota Stories
Gates open 6 p.m.
Performance at 8 p.m.
\$15 adults, \$10 kids 6-12
Theater on the Prairie
De Smet, SD

JULY 5-7
Badlands Astronomy
Festival
10 a.m.-11:30 p.m.
Ben Reifel Visitor Center
Interior, SD
605-433-5243

JULY 7-12
Deadwood 3 Wheeler Rally
All day
Deadwood Event Complex
Deadwood, SD
800-274-1876 ext 1103

JULY 13
9th Annual Auto Value Car
Show
11 a.m.-4 p.m.
Hav-A-Rest Campground
Redfield, SD

JULY 14
Lion's Club Summer Fest/
Car Show
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Groton City Park
Groton, SD

July 19
Zucchini Fest
5 p.m.
Main Street
Bristol, SD
605-590-0000

JULY 19-20
Storybook Land Festival
4-8:30 p.m. on Friday
10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday
Storybook Land in Wylie Park
Aberdeen, SD
605-626-7015

JULY 19-20
Farley Fest
All day
Lake Farley Park
Milbank, SD
605-432-6656

JULY 20
21st Annual "On the Road to
Wishes" Poker Run for Make
a Wish
10:30 a.m.
Bieglers Motors/CNS Motor Sports
Aberdeen, SD

JULY 25
Groton Summer Downtown
Sip & Shop
5-8 p.m.
Groton, SD

AUG. 22-24
Delta Kappa Gama Used
Book Sale
Wylie Park Pavillion
Aberdeen, SD
605-225-6713

AUG. 8
Family Fun Fest
5:30-7:30 p.m.
Groton, SD

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

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