

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



South Dakota Art

**Trashyard
Treasures**

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**The Story of
Dude Dad**

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Northern Electric members will reap the benefits of being part of a cooperative with stable rates in 2023



Char Hager
CEO/General
Manager

Have you seen the price of eggs?

For the past several months that question has become a quick way to strike up small talk with an acquaintance at the local café, ball game, or community event. It may even be more popular than talking about the weather. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, the price of eggs increased by 32 percent in 2022. USDA reported in January that the overall cost of food in America increased by 9.9 percent last year and the agency's prediction for 2023 is that food prices will increase another 7 percent.

All our members are reaping the benefits of being part of a co-op because the success of our electric cooperative system is keeping your rates flat.

Food, fuel, and energy are three of the most basic necessities that we all need to keep our families safe, healthy, and warm. And while prices at the pump and in your pantry continue to rise, I am pleased to let you know that the price of electricity will not be going up for Northern Electric members. Northern Electric Cooperative and your Board of Directors have adopted a budget for 2023 that will not require a rate increase.

All our members are reaping the benefits of being part of a co-op because the success of our electric cooperative system is keeping your rates flat this year. Northern Electric is a not-for-profit cooperative which means that we exist to provide you - the members at the end of the line - with safe and reliable electricity. That is it. We do not exist to make a profit (or margins) and if we do have excess margins, we pass it on to our members.

Northern Electric is also a co-op member. Northern Electric is a member of East River Electric Power Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative. Those cooperatives operate our wholesale generation and transmission of electricity. They are also set up as not-for-profit co-ops to provide safe and reliable electricity to members. Basin Electric had larger than expected margins in 2022 because it took advantage of higher commodity prices through its subsidiaries and had larger than expected sales to non-members. That success benefits the entire cooperative system and allows us to keep your rates stable.

Northern Electric has felt the pinch of higher prices for materials, fuel, and labor just like every other business and household across the country. However, we can maintain steady rates without any increases because we are a co-op and we are part of a cooperative network. The success of our generation and transmission cooperatives is keeping your electricity affordable.

Yes, the price of everything is going up. USDA is expecting another 27 percent increase in the price of eggs this year which will have even more people asking, 'have you seen the price of eggs?' But, with no rate increase to your Northern Electric bill in 2023 we hope the cooperative difference will continue to make a difference in your budget.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

NORTHERN ELECTRIC

(USPS 396-040)

Board President: Nolan Wipf

Board of Directors

Todd Hettich - Vice President
Ron Kaaz - Secretary
Josh Larson - Treasurer
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Kirk Schaunaman
Scott Sperry
Mike Traxinger

CEO/General Manager: Char Hager
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Operations Manager: Jerry Weber

Manager of Member Services: Russel Ulmer

Manager of Information Technology: Derek Gorecki

Communications Director: Ben Dunsmoor
bdunsmoor@northernelectric.coop

Executive Secretary: Kay Albrecht

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's regular board meeting was held January 19, 2023, at the headquarters in Bath with all directors present. As the first order of business, the board approved the December 22, 2022, minutes, and December expenditures. The board then reviewed and accepted monthly reports by management.

East River Director Kirk Schaunaman reported on the East River Board meeting held January 5, 2023. General Manager Char Hager reported on the East River MAC Meeting held January 3, 2023. South Dakota Rural Electric Association Director Nolan Wipf reported on the SDREA Board Meeting, Annual Meeting, and Legislative Dinner held January 12-13, 2023, in Pierre. Directors Todd Hettich, Kirk Schaunaman, Nolan Wipf, General Manager Char Hager and Communications Director Ben Dunsmoor reported on the SDREA Annual Meeting and Legislative Dinner, which was held January 12-13, 2023, in Pierre.

MANAGER'S REPORT

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

- Informed the board of the Basin Electric Members Only Meeting, January 26, 2023, to be held via Teams at the NEC Headquarters.
- Reminder that the 2023 East River Energize Forum will be February 1-2, in Sioux Falls.
- Reminder that the 2023 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association PowerXchange/TechAdvantage Experience will be March 3-8, in

Nashville, TN.

- Informed the board of Co-op Day at the Capitol, February 21, 2023, in Pierre.
- Reported that the IRS mileage reimbursement will increase from 62.5 cents to 65.5 cents per mile starting January 1, 2023.
- Management staff discussed their written reports.

BOARD REPORT

The board considered and/or acted upon the following:

1. Approved the date and time of the next regular board meeting for 8:30 A.M. on Monday, February 20, 2023.
2. Approved Work Order Inventories #22-12 for \$438,098.61 and #22-12MC for \$56,799.02 to be submitted to Rural Utilities Service (RUS) for reimbursement from loan funds for electric plant construction already completed.
3. Adopted Resolution to Amend the Rural Utilities Service Revenue Deferral Plan.
4. Approved modification to Electric Tariff.
5. Authorized Attorney to sign the East River First Amendment to the Joint Defense and Common Interest Agreement.
6. Tabled the 2022 Long Range Plan and 2023-2026 Construction Work Plan.
7. Approved director attendance to director meetings for the year 2023.

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

FINANCIAL REPORT

	Dec-22	Dec-21
kWh Sales	33,798,780 kWh	32,618,109 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$1,931,955	\$2,852,084
Total Cost of Service	\$2,486,899	\$2,614,015
Operating Margins.....	(-\$554,944)	\$238,069
Year to Date Margins	\$3,079,156	\$1,920,596

RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE MONTHLY USAGE AND BILL

DEC-2022.....	3,849 kWh.....	\$312.02	0.0811 per kWh
DEC-2021.....	3,372 kWh.....	\$285.36	0.0846 per kWh

Wholesale power cost, taxes, interest, and depreciation account for 75.8% of NEC's total cost of service.

Spring Planting Safety

Farming equipment has become more massive and technologically advanced over time. While these welcome improvements help farmers cover more ground in less time, taller equipment and longer extensions can bring added challenges around power lines.

As farmers prepare to enter the fields for planting, we urge everyone working in the agricultural field to be alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines, poles and other electrical equipment.



Follow the 10-foot distance rule

To stay safe around overhead power lines, follow safe work practices at all times to help prevent serious and even deadly accidents. Start by making sure everyone knows to maintain a minimum 10-foot clearance from power lines.

This 10-foot rule applies not only to the area underneath the power line, but to the full 360 degrees around it. Not only can electricity change paths if direct contact is made, it can also happen when someone or something gets too close to a power line, and the current jumps, also known as arcing.

Other precautions

In addition to the 10-foot rule, take these steps to help decrease the chances of an electrical-related incident:

- If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line, do not get out of the cab because you could be electrocuted. Instead, stay where you are and call 9-1-1 to dispatch the appropriate utility to deenergize the power.
- If it is not safe to stay in the cab due to fire or smoke, make

a solid, clean jump with both feet landing at the same time. Hop away with feet together as far as you can.

- If you come across an accident or incident near a downed power line, alert individuals (from at least 50 feet away) to stay in the cab or vehicle as long as there is no imminent danger. Call 9-1-1 and do not approach the scene.
- Have a daily meeting with staff to go over possible hazards. Map out and review routes where equipment will be moved and ensure it will clear power lines.
- Teach anyone working with or for you (including family members and seasonal employees) about power line awareness and proper clearance distance.
- When working around power lines, always use a spotter, who has a broader vantage point than the person in the cab.
- Visually inspect overhead lines, which may not meet height codes due to age or pole damage. If a wire is hanging low, never try to move it; instead, contact your electric utility for assistance.
- Lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads.



Take care when plugging in appliances

Stella Nilson

Stella Nilson gives good advice on circuit safety. Overloading circuits is a major cause of residential fires, and she warns people to take care when plugging in appliances. Stella is the daughter of Kyle and Alision Nilson, members of Moreau-Grand Electric based in Timber Lake.

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.



SEAFOOD SPECIALTY

SEAFOOD PARTY DIP**Ingredients:**

1 pkg. mock crab sticks
 1 pkg. mock crab pieces
 1 pkg. mock lobster
 1 pkg. salad shrimp
 1 can water chestnuts
 1 medium onion (optional)
 1 c. real mayonnaise
 2 pkg. Philly cream cheese
 Dried parsley, garlic powder, salt, and pepper to taste

METHOD

Grind crab, lobster, shrimp, and water chestnuts. Chop onion. Using a mixer, blend mayo and cream cheese until smooth. Add parsley, garlic powder, salt, and pepper to taste. Combine with seafood. Mix well and refrigerate. Serve with various kinds of crackers.

Kari Larson Reder, Warner, S.D.

WALLEYE CAKES**Ingredients:**

8 oz. walleye (cooked, cooled, and flaked)
 1 1/2 c. mayonnaise
 4 eggs
 1 c. cooked wild rice
 1/2 c. Parmesan cheese
 4 green onions (chopped)
 1 sleeve saltine crackers (crushed)
 1 tsp. crushed garlic
 2 tsps. seasonings (salt, pepper)
 2 tbsp. oil or butter

METHOD

In large bowl, combine walleye, mayo, rice, onion, garlic, and cheese. Add eggs and seasonings. Fold in crushed saltines until the mixture is firm enough to form cakes. Fry in olive oil for 2-3 minutes on each side or until crispy. Serve with topping: 1/2 c. mayo, 1 tsp. garlic powder, and 1 oz. crumbled blue cheese. Mix together.

Dar Duncan, Milbank, S.D.

SHRIMP PASTA**Ingredients:**

1 can (14 1/2 oz.) diced tomatoes, undrained
 1 can (6 oz.) tomato paste
 1 c. water
 2 tsps. sugar
 1 tsp. basil leaves
 1 tsp. garlic powder
 1 tsp. oregano leaves
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper
 8 oz. pasta, such as linguine or spaghetti
 1 lb. medium shrimp, peeled and deveined

METHOD

Mix tomatoes, tomato paste, water, sugar, basil, garlic powder, oregano, salt and red pepper in large saucepan. Bring to boil on medium-high heat. Reduce heat to low; simmer, uncovered, 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Meanwhile, cook pasta as directed on package, adding shrimp during last 3 minutes of cooking. Drain. Return pasta and shrimp to saucepot. Pour tomato sauce over shrimp and pasta. Toss gently to coat well. Serve immediately with shredded Parmesan cheese, if desired.

mccormick.com

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.



'WHO POWERS YOU' CELEBRATES LOCAL HEROES

Nominate friends and neighbors making a difference in your local communities

Nominations are now open for *Who Powers You*, a contest being hosted by Northern Electric Cooperative and the region's Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives. The second annual *Who Powers You* contest seeks to highlight local figures who are making a difference in their communities.

"No one succeeds alone, and that is especially true in rural areas, where friends and neighbors in tight-knit communities support, encourage and inspire each other," Northern Electric Cooperative Communications Director Ben Dunsmoor said. "Those people don't do it for the recognition, but they deserve to be recognized, and we'd like to help make that happen."

Member-owners, employees, and

citizens who live or work within Northern Electric Cooperative's service territory are eligible to be nominated. Nominations are currently being accepted online through April 7, 2023, at WhoPowersYouContest.com. Weekly finalists will be announced and featured on Keloland Living starting March 9, 2023, and the three contest winners will be announced on Keloland Living on May 25, 2023.

The *Who Powers You* contest grand prize winner will receive a \$3,000 prize. The second-place winner will receive \$1,500 and the contest's third place winner will receive \$500.

The Don't Tread on Me (DTOM) Foundation and Veterans Ranch near Warner, SD, won the first

NOMINATE SOMEONE 'WHO POWERS YOU'

Visit WhoPowersYouContest.com to nominate an individual

- Anyone who is making a difference in the communities served by Northern Electric Cooperative can be nominated.

Weekly finalists will be announced on Keloland Living

- Finalists will be featured on Keloland Living starting March 9.

Three winners will be announced May 25

- The three winners of the contest will be announced on Keloland Living and receive cash prizes.
 - 1st Place - \$3,000
 - 2nd Place - \$1,500
 - 3rd Place - \$500

place \$3,000 prize in 2022 during the contest's first year. The DTOM Foundation and Veterans Ranch is a Northern Electric Cooperative member which provides military service members, veterans, and their families a safe place for healing and recovery. The organization provides housing assistance and medical assistance to veterans along with Max Rhythmic Motion Sequencing (MRMS) equine therapy to treat traumatic brain injuries, PTSD, anxiety, and other injuries.

"The *Who Powers You* contest highlights the commitment of our co-op to the communities and member-owners that we serve. We know that our co-op community is filled with people making a difference," Dunsmoor said.

To learn more about the *Who Powers You* contest and to nominate someone in your community, visit WhoPowersYouContest.com.

TELL US WHO POWERS YOU!

We know our co-op community is filled with people making a difference. Let's celebrate them! Nominate a member or employee of your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative who goes above and beyond.

They could win up to \$3,000!

Nominate your local hero at
[WHOPOWERSYOUCONTEST.COM](https://www.whopowersyoucontest.com)



TRASHYARD TREASURES

Lee Lindsley of Piedmont turns trash into treasure when he isn't on the clock working for the South Dakota Department of Transportation.

South Dakota Man Welds Junkyard Scraps Into Pieces of Art

Frank Turner

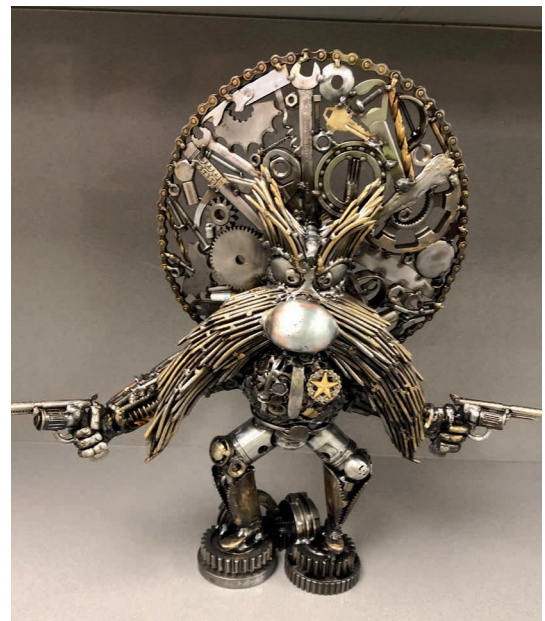
frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Lee Lindsley has a real talent for welding trash into treasure. Given the time, Lindsley can sculpt even the most unwanted junkyard scrap – busted gears, rusted lug nuts and mangled bicycle chains – into an artistic masterpiece.

By day, Lindsley works as a region inspector for the South Dakota Department of Transportation in the Black Hills, but by night, he can be found in his shop putting hours of work into his metallic puzzles, welding them together piece by piece.

When not on the clock, Lindsley is busy tackling his next project, investing anywhere from 30 to 100 hours into each sculpture. The end result often portrays a snapshot of rural life in the Black Hills: a life-size hunting dog made from a mix of old tools and spent rifle rounds, a miniature snowmobile standing on a displaced piston and a gun-slinging Yosemite Sam with a beard fashioned from old nails.

“Metal sculpting is some-



Famous cartoon character Yosemite Sam is one of Lindsley's favorite metal creations.

thing that anyone can do if they put their mind to it,” said Lindsley. “All I do is throw parts of junk together.”

In many ways, Lindsley’s passion for sculpting and welding echoes the resourcefulness of the very artwork he makes. When Lindsley began his metal sculpting journey, he didn’t have a formal education or even a background in art to guide him. Instead, he relied on his welding skills and the bits of scrap he had available to make his remarkable artwork.

“It’s hard to put a price on these pieces, but if my artwork does sell, I want to donate a portion of the sale to a charity.”

It was Lindsley’s second cousin Chris Degen, a teacher at Mitchell Technical College, who inspired Lindsley’s first foray into metal sculpting four years ago. Degen recalls gifting Lindsley’s son, a former lineman, a simple lineman made from nuts and bolts during the holidays. The quirky Christmas gift became a catalyst for the two to start creating new projects and bouncing new ideas off each other. According to Degen, Lindsley just ran away with the idea.

“He went crazy with it,” Degen laughed. “Lee started making sculptures that went way above and beyond what I was doing. I would put an hour into my project, and he would put one hundred into his.”

Taking another step forward in his hobby, Lindsley began researching works and art pieces posted online by world-famous metal sculptors, including metal sculptors John Lopez – a South Dakotan – and Brian Mock, whose masterpieces provided Lindsley a roadmap of what can be accomplished.

Since embarking on his metal sculpting journey, Lindsley has completed more than 18 metal sculptures, and his hobby continues to blossom. For the first time ever, Lindsley put one of his sculptures

up for sale in A1 Al’s Pheasant Ranch in Emery S.D. Since November, Lindsley’s metal hunting dog has stood proudly in one of the ranch’s hunting cabins, waiting for a buyer, and although the dog hasn’t left the shelf just yet, Lindsley said he is

excited to see his work out in the open and visible to the public eye.

“It’s hard to put a price on these pieces, but if my artwork does sell, I want to donate a portion of the sale to a charity,” he said. “We will see what happens.”



Lindsley’s metal German shepherd sits proudly in his workshop.



Quinn Vinger began working at Northern Electric on January 3. He graduated from the powerline construction and maintenance program at Mitchell Technical College in 2010.

NEW LINEMAN HIRED

Quinn Vinger hired as new apprentice lineman at the Bath headquarters

Ben Dunsmoor

bdunsmoor@northernelectric.coop

Northern Electric Cooperative has hired Quinn Vinger as a new apprentice lineman. Vinger started working with the crew based out of the Bath headquarters on January 3.

Vinger went to school for powerline construction and maintenance at Mitchell Technical College. He graduated in 2010 and began working as a temporary apprentice lineman for Montana Dakota Utilities (MDU) in North Dakota.

Vinger grew up in Eureka and moved to Aberdeen in 2013 to work at WEB Water in construction and maintenance. But Vinger continued to pursue a career in line work and left WEB Water to work for a

contractor in western North Dakota building power lines in the oil fields. Vinger's grandpa and father were both power linemen and he has always been drawn to the work.

In 2016, Vinger moved back to Aberdeen and went back to working for WEB Water following a few years in the oil fields. Vinger applied for the open position at Northern Electric at the end of 2022 because he continues to have a passion for the career.

"I just love the work," Vinger said about power line construction and maintenance.

Vinger is excited that he has the opportunity to get back into the field he loves at Northern Electric Cooperative.

Vinger lives in Aberdeen and has a wife and a 20-month-old daughter. He enjoys to hunt, fish, camp, and do anything outdoors in his free time.



Fieldwork can feel like second nature. But, complacency when operating around power lines can be deadly.

Staying alert and being prepared can help prevent catastrophic accidents. Knowing what to do if an accident does occur can be the difference between life and death.

RE-ENERGIZING SAFETY



Contact your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative or visit **YourCoopPower.com** to find safety tips and make a plan.

WINTER CAN BE DOWNRIGHT DANGEROUS

Follow these 7 tips to stay safe, especially around downed power lines.



1. STAY PUT

Venture out into a winter storm only when necessary.



2. SLOW DOWN

Leave early so you can go slow.



3. WATCH OUT

Keep a lookout for downed power lines.



4. DON'T MOVE

If you're in a car accident involving a utility pole or power line, stay inside your vehicle.



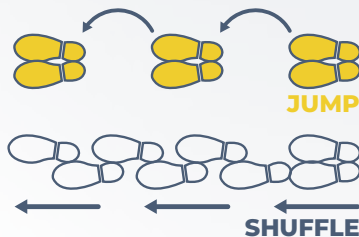
5. CALL 911

Report the accident and stay in place until the line is de-energized.



6. REPORT IT

If you see any damaged electric equipment or downed lines, call your local electric cooperative and stay away.



7. JUMP & SHUFFLE

If it is not safe to remain in your vehicle, jump and land with both feet together. Slowly shuffle at least 40 feet away without lifting your feet. Keep your feet together as much as possible to avoid shock.

RE-ENERGIZING SAFETY

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





THE STORY OF DUDE DAD

Taylor and Heidi Calmus play with their kids (Theo, Juno and Otto) on a playset Taylor built. The family will welcome another baby in March.

Howard Grows More Than Corn

Tara Miller

Central Electric Cooperative

His kids may only know him as dad, but Jimmy Kimmel, the entire internet and 7 million followers can't be wrong – Howard native Taylor Calmus has evolved into a new-age celebrity. Better known as Dude Dad, Calmus is an accomplished actor, video producer, digital content creator, author, builder, television show host and comedian. Besides making regular appearances on Jimmy Kimmel Live, Calmus has also shared the screen with home remodeling experts Chip and Joanna Gaines, acclaimed actor Anthony Anderson and several YouTube stars.

Calmus is the son of Larry and Julie Calmus. He grew up west of Howard with siblings Zach and Maggie, and graduated from Howard High School in 2005. He now lives in Fort Collins, CO, but Calmus credits much of his creativity to his rural upbringing.

"Growing up in rural South Dakota was awesome because it forced us to create our own fun. My parents were big advocates of that. They would say, 'Go outside and

find something to do.' It enabled us to be creative," Calmus said.

His mom, Julie, agrees. "We were sticklers. We didn't let them play Nintendo or watch tv all day." Instead, the kids often spent time outside constructing BMX bike ramps, among other things.

Building Strong Connections

Now a dad himself, Calmus enjoys putting his ingenuity and building skills to work for his kids. "Building things with your kids is one of the best ways to bond with them," he said. "I've made carnival rides, backyard bike parks, multiple tree houses, a boat, just so many things. Being a dad gives you permission to imagine the impossible like kids do. It allows me to connect with them."

Calmus and his wife Heidi, who is originally from Fargo, have three children and another baby due in March. Heidi is often the subject of her husband's videos. Calmus puts his acting skills to work, sporting a long brunette wig as he comedically embellishes her life. Luckily, Heidi is a good sport, and they often share reaction videos in which she critiques his performance.

The couple went on tour this year, performing comedy shows as a team in North Dakota, South Dakota and Colorado. Calmus said without his wife, they would not have experienced this level of success. "Heidi believed in me before I did. Without her, Dude Dad wouldn't exist today."

The Evolution of Dude Dad

Success didn't happen overnight, Calmus explained. Early on, he would often pick up work doing set construction for tv shows and movie projects to make ends meet.

"When I moved away, I worked hard to make it in Hollywood as an actor, and I had some success," he said. "Then, when Heidi was pregnant with our second child, it was clear to me that I needed to do something more stable to support a family. That's when we created Dude Dad."

Mastering the Dude Dad brand took a great deal of time and commitment. Calmus constantly brainstormed new ideas for videos that would align with the brand and appeal to viewers. After all, the more views his content generates, the more income he earns from paid advertising on the various platforms.

A humble individual, Calmus doesn't necessarily consider himself famous. He said, "I think my content caught on faster in



Taylor and Heidi perform stand-up comedy as a team. They recently sold out shows in Fargo, Sioux Falls, and Fort Collins.

South Dakota because I have family here.”

But the numbers don't lie. Dude Dad content has more than 1 billion views on Facebook and roughly 150 million views on YouTube. So, his reach is far greater than just the state of South Dakota.

“With TikTok and other apps, there are a billion new creators every year, so it's a challenge all the time,” Calmus said. “Anybody can make videos online now, but not everybody can stand in front of an audience and perform comedy. It's been a fun and rewarding challenge. Now we get to see the people who are connecting with our content.”

Calmus authored a book entitled “A Dude's Guide to Baby Size” to help expectant dads understand their baby's size throughout pregnancy. He shares guy-friendly size comparisons for reference, such as a lug nut, a tape measure, a pound of ground beef and a football.

Giving Back

Because of his success, Calmus has been able to give back in unique ways. In 2019, he partnered with HGTV “Fixer Upper” star Chip Gaines to raise \$1.49 million for St. Jude's Children's Hospital. This partnership led to Calmus's television show, Super Dad, where he helps other dads build custom backyard play areas for their children.

Calmus is also a champion for Horizon Health Foundation's Smiles for Miles program. He helped the non-profit raise more than \$20,000 in a single day to provide free dental care for local kids.

Most recently, Taylor and Heidi performed

a live show in Fort Collins and donated the proceeds to a neighborhood family who sadly lost their father.

“He left behind two little kids who are friends with our kids, and we just wanted to be there for them however we could,” Calmus shared.

Making the Family Proud

Reggie Gassman, Calmus's uncle, is the Manager of Customer Electrical Services at Sioux Valley Energy in eastern South Dakota. He said he's proud of his nephew's accomplishments.

“When the kids were little, Taylor and Zach were already making home movies. His success creating videos doesn't surprise me at all,” Gassman said. “He takes something from normal, everyday life and sees it from a different angle.”

Gassman joked, “I told Taylor acting genes run in the family because I was named best actor in the junior class play. That's like the Emmys of Canova!”

Calmus said both sides of his family – Calmus and Gassman – are naturally funny and talented in different ways. While Gassmans are widely known for their baseball skills, his uncle Kurt (and his mustache) have famously inspired some of Dude Dad's most iconic characters.

He's Still Just Taylor

Despite his growing list of accomplishments, he's still the same guy his family knows and loves.

Calmus's mom Julie shared, “Since he was two years old, Taylor was always entertaining people and goofing around. His older brother Zach is just as clever, so there's always laughter when the family gets together. It's pretty cool he's been able to make a living doing that.”

She said when strangers recognize her son as Dude Dad, she chuckles. “He's still just Taylor to us.”



“Husbands of Target” is a viral video with more than 80 million views that Taylor developed in collaboration with other digital content creators.

ONLINE SAFETY

Information provided by KidsHealth.org from Nemours Children's Health. © 1995-2021. The Nemours Foundation/KidsHealth®

Keeping your kids safe online

The Internet can be wonderful for kids. They can use it to research school reports, communicate with teachers and other kids, and play interactive games.

But online access also comes with risks, like inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and online predators. Using social media apps and websites where kids interact, predators may pose as a child or teen looking to make a new friend. They might prod the child to exchange personal information, such as address and phone number, or encourage kids to call them, seeing their phone number via caller ID.

Parents should be aware of what their kids see and hear online, who they meet, and what they share about themselves. Talk with your kids, use tools to protect them, and keep an eye on their activities.

Online Protection Tools

Online tools let you control your kids' access to adult material and help protect them from Internet predators. Many Internet service providers (ISPs) provide parent-control options. You

can also get software that helps block access to sites and restricts personal information from being sent online. Other programs can monitor and track online activity.

Getting Involved in Kids' Online Activities

More important than blocking objectionable material is teaching your kids safe and responsible online behavior, and keeping an eye on their Internet use.

Basic guidelines to share with your kids for safe online use:

- Follow the family rules, and those set by the Internet service provider.
- Never post or trade personal pictures.
- Never reveal personal information, such as address, phone number, or school name or location.
- Use only a screen name and don't share passwords (other than with parents).

- Never agree to get together in person with anyone met online without parent approval and/or supervision.
- Never respond to a threatening email, message, post, or text.
- Always tell a parent or other trusted adult about any communication or conversation that was scary or hurtful.

Basic guidelines for parental supervision:

- Spend time online together to teach your kids appropriate online behavior.
- Keep the computer in a common area where you can watch and monitor its use, not in individual bedrooms. Monitor any time spent on smartphones or tablets.
- Bookmark kids' favorite sites for easy access.
- Check your credit card and phone bills for unfamiliar account charges.
- Find out what, if any, online protection is offered by your child's school, after-school center, friends' homes, or any place



where kids could use a computer without your supervision.

- Take your child seriously if he or she reports an uncomfortable online exchange.

If you're aware of the sending, use, or viewing of child pornography online, call the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at (800) 843-5678 or go online to their CyberTipline. They'll make sure the info is forwarded to law enforcement officials for investigation. Contact your local law enforcement agency or the FBI if your child has received child pornography via the Internet.

Watch for warning signs of a child being targeted by an online predator. These can include:

- Spending long hours online,

especially at night

- Phone calls from people you don't know
- Unsolicited gifts arriving in the mail
- Your child suddenly turning off the computer or other device when you walk into the room
- Withdrawal from family life and reluctance to discuss online activities

Talk to your kids! Keep an open line of communication and make sure that they feel comfortable turning to you when they have problems online.

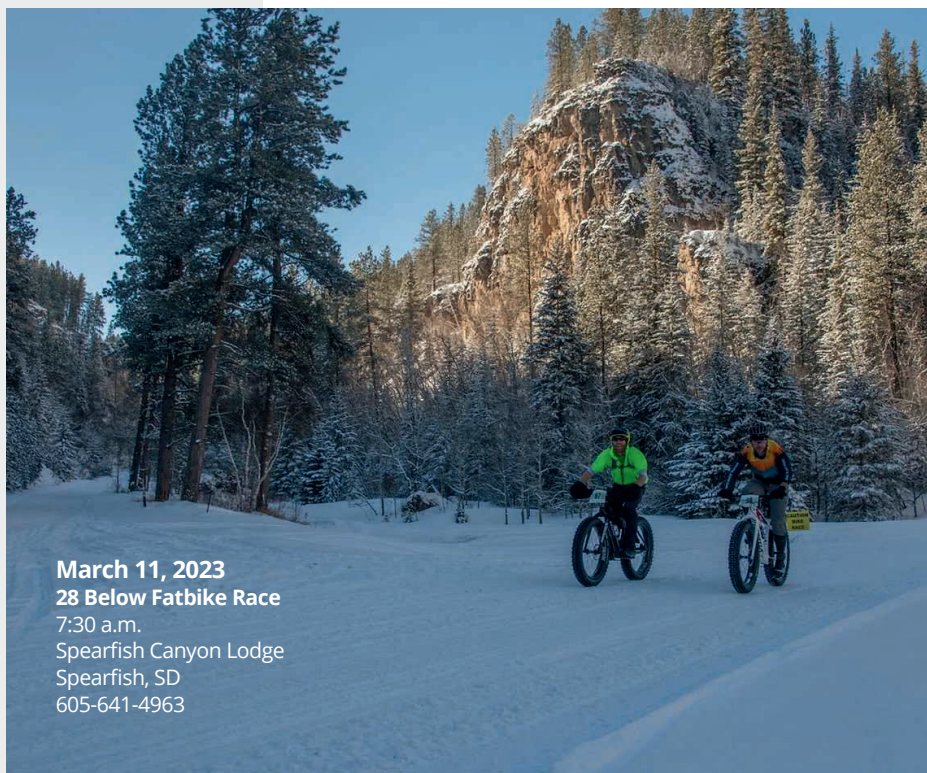
The Internet and Teens

As kids get older, it gets a little trickier to monitor their time spent online. They may carry a smartphone with them at all times. They probably want – and

need – some privacy. This is healthy and normal, as they're becoming more independent from their parents. The Internet can provide a safe "virtual" environment for exploring some newfound freedom if precautions are taken.

Talk about the sites and apps teens use and their online experiences. Discuss the dangers of interacting with strangers online and remind them that people online don't always tell the truth. Explain that passwords are there to protect against things like identity theft. They should never share them with anyone, even a boyfriend, girlfriend, or best friend.

Taking an active role in your kids' online activities helps ensure that they benefit from them without being exposed to the potential dangers.



March 11, 2023
28 Below Fatbike Race
 7:30 a.m.
 Spearfish Canyon Lodge
 Spearfish, SD
 605-641-4963

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.

MARCH 1-7
"In Flanders Fields" Art Exhibit & Silent Auction
 Vermillion Public Library
 Vermillion, SD
 605-658-6654

MARCH 4
Annual Ag Day
 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
 Washington Pavilion
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-367-6000

MARCH 4
Hill City Arts Council: Live On Stage
 5:30 p.m.
 High Country Guest Ranch
 Hill City, SD
 605-574-2810

MARCH 11
28 Below Fatbike Race
 7:30 a.m.
 Spearfish Canyon Lodge
 Spearfish, SD

MARCH 18
Shamrock Shuffle Fun Run
 12 p.m.
 Main Street
 Presho, SD
 605-895-2559

MARCH 18
Shriners Kids Fun Day
 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Scherr-Howe Event Center
 Mobridge, SD
 605-845-2500

MARCH 18
Hill City Arts Council: Live On Stage
 5:30 p.m.
 High Country Guest Ranch
 Hill City, SD
 605-574-2810

MARCH 21
Knee High Naturalist: Birds
 Peter Norbeck Outdoor Education Center
 Custer, SD

MARCH 24-25
Schmeckfest
 Freeman Academy Campus
 Freeman, SD
 605-321-7351

MARCH 25-26
Greater Sioux Falls Model Train Show
 Multi-Cultural Center
 Sioux Falls, SD

MARCH 30
"The Wildest Banquet Auction in the Midwest"
 5:30 p.m.
 South Dakota Military Heritage Alliance
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-339-1203

MARCH 31-APRIL 2
70th Annual Hayes Play: Trouble in Tumbleweed
 Hayes Community Hall
 Hayes, SD
 605-280-6556

APRIL 1
East Dakota Chapter NWTF 30th Banquet
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-940-0702

APRIL 2-4
"The Psychic-a Murder Mystery of Sorts" Community Theater Performance
 Town Players Theater
 Watertown, SD
 605-882-2076

APRIL 21-22
Junkin' Market Days, Spring Market
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Building
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-941-4958

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