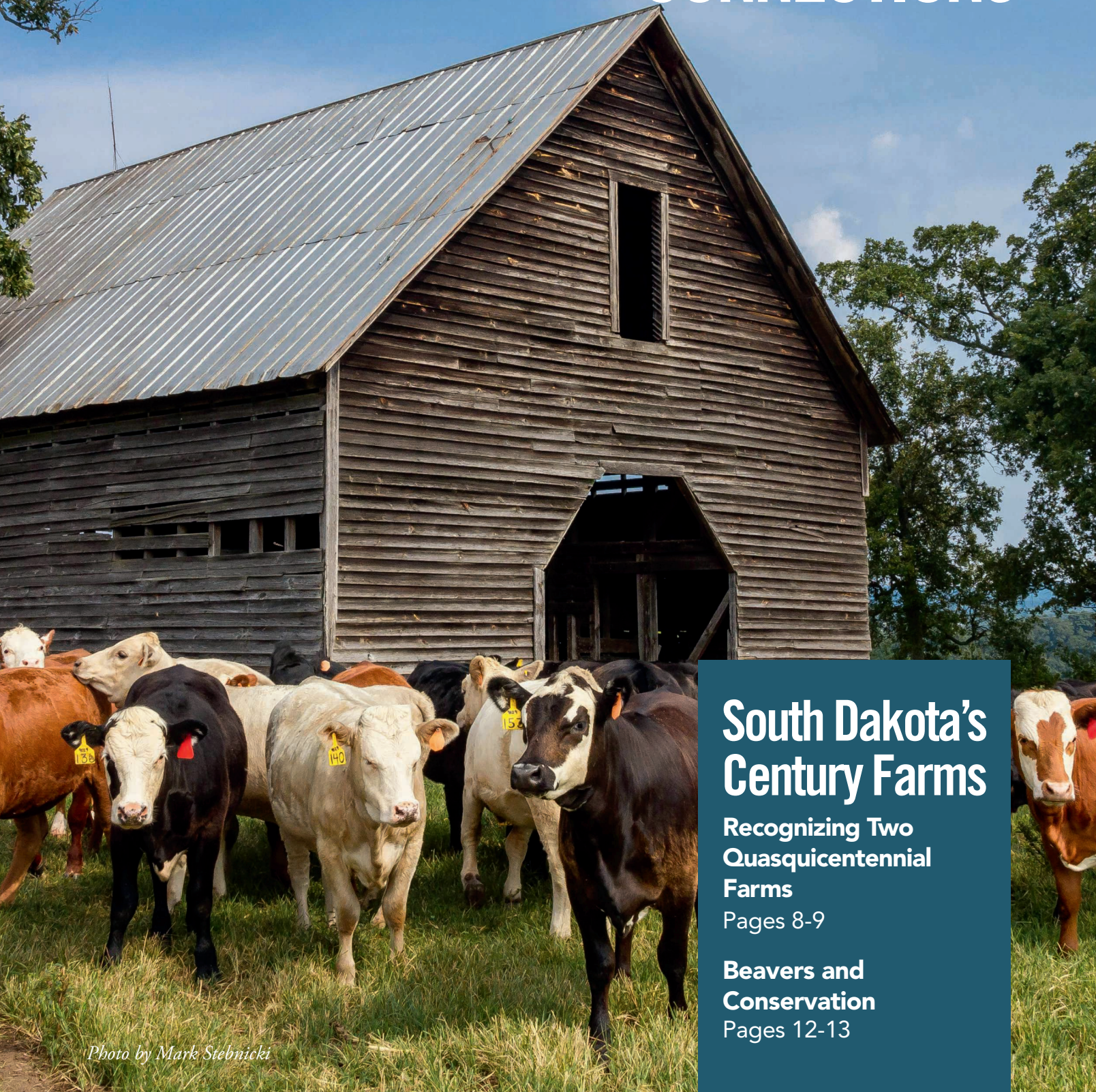




COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



South Dakota's Century Farms

Recognizing Two
Quasiquicentennial
Farms

Pages 8-9

Beavers and
Conservation

Pages 12-13

Photo by Mark Stebnicki

See You at the Annual Meeting



Tim O'Leary
General Manager

The cooperative's 85th Annual Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 5th and it will be held at the cooperative's warehouse in Tyler. The annual meeting report is included in this month's newsletter, and we will have copies at the annual meeting.

The Annual Meeting is held each year to update the membership on what is going on at the cooperative and how the cooperative is doing financially. The cooperative also holds its director elections during the annual meeting. The election process is where the membership gets a chance to elect the individuals that will represent them on the cooperative's board of directors. We are looking at starting the business meeting a little earlier, so that we can get you home a little earlier.

In April, the cooperative held its local district meetings to identify director candidates to represent them on the cooperative's board of directors. This year's director candidates are Mary Gunnink and Jason Piercy in District 1, Joel Buyck in District 2, and Jared Dritz and Darin Brink in District 3. **You can find more information about all of the director candidates on pages 8 and 9 in the annual meeting report.**

Once the district's business meeting was completed, cooperative staff provided an update on cooperative activities for the previous year, programs offered by the cooperative and answered questions from the members at the district meetings. This year's staff report focused on the reasons behind the recent rate increase that starts on May 1st and will be seen on the bill that goes out the first week of June, tax incentives for energy efficiency improvements and small solar, and the new electric vehicles rebate and rates. This year's meetings were well attended and even included a location change as we moved the District 3 meeting from Porter to Hendricks. Thank you to all the members that came to the meetings.

Please mark your calendar and join us for your annual meeting on Wednesday, June 5th. This year's annual meeting theme is "Powering Possibilities". The annual meeting represents our largest scheduled event during the year, and it includes a catered meal from the Lincoln County Pork Producers and the Country House. It is a great opportunity to meet and visit cooperative employees and directors and hear reports on the cooperative's financial position and other activities going on at your electric cooperative.

85TH ANNUAL MEETING LYON-LINCOLN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Wednesday, June 5th, 2024

**Lyon-Lincoln Electric Headquarters Building
205 US Highway 14 | Tyler, Minnesota**



Registration: 5:00-6:30pm

Meal Served From: 5:30-6:30pm

Served by:
Lincoln County Pork Producers
& The Country House

Business Meeting: 6:45pm



**COOPERATIVE
CONNECTIONS****LYON-LINCOLN
ELECTRIC**

(ISSN 1540-6989)

Board of Directors

Dale Fier, Taunton – President

Mike Longtin, Taunton – Vice
President

Kathleen Schreurs, Tyler – Sec./Treas.

Joel Buyck, Garvin

Jared Dritz, Porter

Galen Grant, Russell

Mary Gunnink, Lake Benton

Scott Johnson, Tyler

James Rokeh, Minneota

Staff and Personnel

Tim O'Leary – General Manager

Lyle Lamote – Line Superintendent

Kristi Jensen - Finance Manager

Brian Jeremiason – Manager of
Marketing & External Relations

Rochelle Borresen – Accountant

Lisa Hauswedell – Billing Clerk

Jessica Gums – Executive Assistant

Staff and Personnel

Journeyman Linemen:

Ross Birath

Dan Tutt

Tyler Blomme

Tyler Sand

Nathan Pavek

Trent Skjefte – Apprentice Lineman

Sam Rohde – Apprentice Lineman

Wade Thooft – Operations Staff
Assistant

Alan Fischer – Warehouse

Coordinator/Work Order Clerk

www.llec.coopLyon-Lincoln Electric Summer
hours are 7:00 AM – 4:30 PM
Monday thru Friday

LYON-LINCOLN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, 205 W. Hwy. 14, PO Box 639, Tyler, MN 56178. Electric co-op members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Tyler Post Office, Tyler, MN 56178 and at additional mailing offices.

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Jessica Gums, Editor**CHANGE
YOUR HABITS****To \$ave Money on Your
Energy Bill**

Whether you are looking for free or low-cost ways to save energy or need to make a major purchase that will help pay for itself over time due to energy savings, here are some ways to make a difference.

No-Cost

- Turn off lights when you leave a room.
- Program your programmable thermostat.
- Use sunlight for heat in the winter.
- Fully load dishwashers, clothes washers & dryers.
- Use window coverings to keep out cold or heat.
- Turn off electronics when not in use.

Low-Cost

- Use smart strips that turn off power to unused items.
- Make sure your HVAC system is serviced regularly & filters are changed as often as recommended.
- Purchase an insulating blanket made for hot water heaters.
- Find and fill air leaks in your home.
- Caulk between window/door frames & walls.
- Install a smart thermostat.

Major Purchases

- Upgrade to a high-efficiency HVAC system.
- Purchase energy-efficient appliances.
- Insulate attics, exterior walls, basements & crawl spaces.
- Purchase a clothes dryer with a moisture sensor.
- Purchase a water-saving dishwasher or washing machine.
- Replace old windows with energy-efficient versions.

Learn more at:



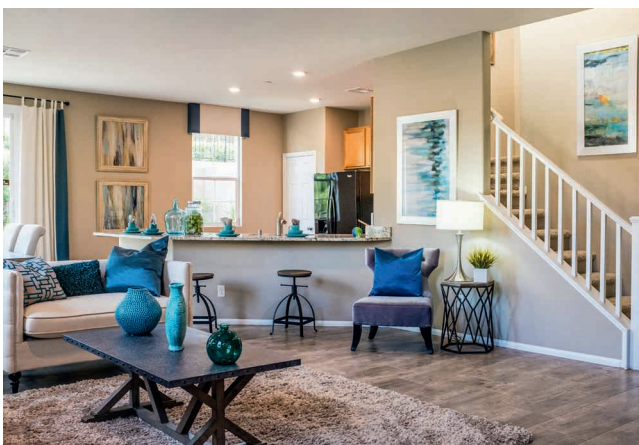
Prepare Your Family for Fire Emergencies

In only a matter of minutes, a small house fire can rage out of control, reaching temperatures of up to 1,500°F. In most cases, you have one to two minutes to get out safely.

We practice fire emergency drills at work and school, but don't forget to create and practice a home escape plan, as well. It is beneficial to keep your plan visible, like on the refrigerator, to help family and visitors remember what to do. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) stresses that even children as young as three years old can understand an escape plan.

Helpful Planning Tips:

- Plan for two ways to escape from each room.
- Pick a meeting location away from your home.
- Plan for everyone in your home, including babies and others who may need help to escape.
- Teach children not to hide during a fire; they must get out and stay out.



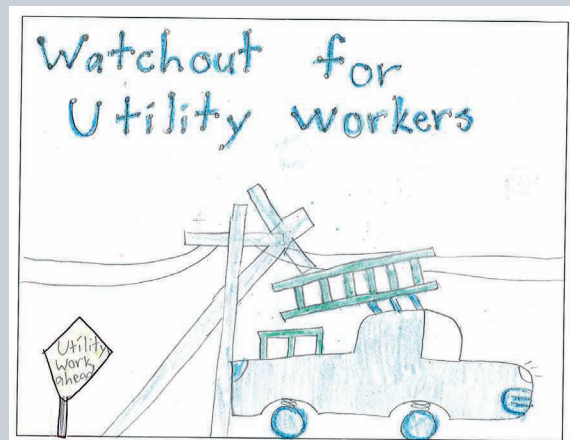
- Practice your escape drill with everyone in your family at least twice a year.

Ways to Stay Safe:

- Clear toys, furniture and other clutter from exits.
- Check that windows open easily – fix any that stick.
- Test the batteries in your smoke alarms monthly.
- Be sure that security bars on doors and windows have a quick-release latch, and everyone knows how to open them.

Special Considerations for Apartment Buildings:

- If you live in a multi-story apartment building, map out as many escape routes as possible to get to the stairways on your floor.
- If you live in a high-rise, plan to use the stairs – never the elevator – to escape a fire.
- A secondary route might be a window onto an adjacent roof or a collapsible ladder for escape from upper-story windows – purchase only collapsible ladders evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratory (UL).



Stay Away from Power Lines

Reese Rindels, Age 9

Reese Rindels cautions readers to watch out for utility workers. Reese's parents are Rochelle and Kyle Rindels, members of Sioux Valley Energy.

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

DELICIOUS *Dairy*

CHOCOLATE FUDGE FROSTING

Ingredients:

2 1/4 cups confectioners' sugar
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/4 tsp. cinnamon
6 oz. (3/4 package) cream cheese, softened
3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) butter, softened
8 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, melted and cooled slightly
1 tbsp. pure vanilla extract

Method

Mix sugar, cocoa powder and cinnamon in medium bowl until well blended. Set aside. Beat cream cheese and butter in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until smooth. Gradually beat in cocoa mixture on low speed until well blended. Gradually beat in melted chocolate then vanilla until well blended.

McCormick.com

RED VELVET HOT CHOCOLATE

Ingredients:

4 cups whole milk
1/4 cup sugar
10 oz. semi-sweet baking chocolate, coarsely chopped
2 tsps. red food color
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
Vanilla Whipped Cream
1/2 cup heavy cream
2 tbsps. confectioners' sugar
1/2 tsp. pure vanilla extract

Method

Place milk and granulated sugar in medium saucepan. While stirring, bring to simmer on medium heat. Remove from heat. Stir in chocolate with wire whisk until melted. Stir in food color and vanilla. Serve with marshmallows. For the vanilla whipped cream, beat heavy cream, confectioners' sugar and vanilla in medium bowl with electric mixer on high speed until stiff peaks form.

McCormick.com

LEMON PUDDING DESSERT

Ingredients:

1 cup COLD butter
1 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
1 8 oz. tub cool whip, divided
2 pkgs. (small) instant lemon pudding
2 cups flour
1 cup powdered sugar
3 cups COLD milk

Method

In bowl, cut butter into flour until crumbly. Press into an ungreased 9 x 13 inch glass pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 18 to 22 minutes or until set. Cool on wire rack. In mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and powdered sugar until smooth. Fold in one cup cool whip. Spread over cooled crust. In bowl, beat milk and pudding mixes on low speed for 2 minutes. Carefully spread over cream cheese layer. Top with remaining cool whip. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or more. Yields 12 to 16 servings.

Mary Jessen
Holabird, 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.

March Board Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative was held on Thursday, March 28, 2024. Directors present: James Rokeh, Kathy Schreurs, Scott Johnson, Dale Fier, Mike Longtin, Jared Dritz, Joel Buyck, and Galen Grant. Absent: Mary Gunnink. Also present: General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, Finance Manager, Kristi Jensen, and Attorney, Michael W. Cable. The board meeting was rescheduled due to poor weather conditions on Monday, March 25.

The Board and others in attendance stood and gave the Pledge of Allegiance. President, Dale Fier, then called the meeting to order and routine business was conducted including approval of the February 26, 2024 meeting minutes, a review of the check schedule, applications for memberships, and shares to be cancelled.

Finance Manager, Kristi Jensen, gave the Financial and Statistical Report for the period ending January 31, 2024. Ms. Jensen then reviewed with the Board the Financial and Operating Report for Electric Distribution for Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. The Board reviewed information that had been received from Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange concerning their 2023 margin allocation to the Cooperative.

Lyle Lamote, Line Superintendent, gave the Outage Report indicating that there were no outages to report for the month of February, 2024. He also reviewed with the Board that the

monthly Safety Meeting was held on February 29, 2024 concerning the topic of Speak Up, Listen Up which was conducted by MREA's new Safety Instructor, Erick Boder. Mr. Lamote indicated that the linemen were doing the following work some of which had been completed and some was still in the process: The linemen finished their yearly line patrol of the distribution system, continued line maintenance activities, and corrected items found during their line patrol and continued to trim throughout the Cooperative's service territory.

Brian Jeremiason, Manager of Marketing and External Relations, reviewed his report with the board which included an update on ongoing solar projects. Mr. Jeremiason visited Southview Elementary in Marshall, Minnesota with Jennifer Gross, Education and Outreach Coordinator for East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc., and presented the Co-ops in the classroom program to eight 4th grade classes, and reviewed information concerning Lyon-Lincoln Electric's Electric Vehicle Rebate Program and a new pilot EV Electric rate schedule.

General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, then gave his Manager's Report; some of the items reviewed were as follows: the Board reviewed the February power bill and sales to members and compared those figures to budgeted amounts, looked at line loss for the system, and reported on the East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. MAC Meeting. There was discussion concerning

Minnesota's 2024 legislative session, the MREA Annual Meeting, Operation RoundUp Scholarship funding, and that Linemen Appreciation Day would be held on Monday, April 8, 2024.

The Board reviewed the February 2024 Cyber Security Program Report presented by East River Cyber Security Department dated March 4, 2024.

Vice-President, Mike Longtin, discussed with the Board the East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. Monthly Meeting he had attended. Director, James Rokeh, Secretary/Treasurer, Kathy Schreurs, and Director, Joel Buyck, gave a report concerning the NRECA Power Exchange that they had attended. It was indicated to the Board that speakers were top rate and they discussed artificial intelligence, CoBank issues, available grants, and then reviewed upcoming meetings and notices.

The Board was presented with the Nominating Committee's Meeting Minutes for February 27, 2024 and it was indicated that Mary Gunnink was nominated for District #1, Joel Buyck was nominated for District #2, and Jared Dritz and Richard Hemish were nominated for District #3.

The Board then reviewed The East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. monthly video report which included the Basin Summary.

There being no further business to come before the Board, President, Dale Fier, adjourned the meeting at 12:24pm.

HELP US! Return Capital Credits to Our Members

The "capital credit" refund that our members receive simply for being a member of, and purchasing power from, a rural electric cooperative is a yearly occurrence. Capital Credits are issued to our current Lyon-Lincoln Electric members as a credit on their electric bill. Although, for our former members that are now inactive, a check was placed in the mail. But what happens if the check gets lost, goes uncashed, or is returned to us by the post office?

Lyon-Lincoln Electric goes on the search for our "missing members" by publishing a list of checks from the previous year that remains undeliverable or uncashed for one reason or another. Please take a look at the list below. If you know where any of our "missing members" are located, please call our office at 1-800-927-6276 or 1-507-247-5505.

It's also the right time to remind our members that when receiving a capital credit check in the mail, please make an effort to cash it as soon as possible, even if it's a small amount.

We know that life takes people down many different paths, but as members come and go, it's always a good idea to provide us with a valid address. For members of Lyon-Lincoln Electric that are planning on moving from the area, it's recommendable to inform us of your forwarding address, so future refund checks can be delivered to you.

For those dealing with the loss of a family member who was on "REA" at any time, remember to check with Lyon-Lincoln Electric for a possible lump-sum settlement for their estate.

Do you know our missing members?

Chad Almjeld
235 W. Main St.
Waconia, MN 55387

Miguel Arizola
212 Ash Dr.
Marshall, MN 56258

Zeb & Cheryl Bartels
211 N. Division Street
Hendricks, MN 56136

Arthur Cadwell
1730 Thunderbird Rd. St. 1
Marshall, MN 56258

Joseph Dejaeghere
401 S. Hill St., Apt. 336
Marshall, MN 56258

Tristen Fuller
5013 S. Louise Ave.
Sioux Falls, SD 57108

Justin Gaalswyk
617 Cadillac Road
Lake Benton, MN 56149

Donald Gorecki
207 N. English St.
Ghent, MN 56239

Christopher Haase
1003 Emerald Ct. Apt. 1
Marshall, MN 56258

Bradley W. Hansen
648 N. 7th St.
Dawson, MN 56232

Thomas & Jill Hemmy
1426 Co. Road 22
Amherst Junction, WI 54407

Eugene Isfeld
1024 3rd Ave.
Madison, MN 56256

Rodney S. Johnson
105 Holly Tree Circle
Duncan, SC 29334

Crystal Krapf
2766 115th Street
Tyler, MN 56178

Christine Lindsley
104 N. Redwood Street
Lynd, MN 56157

Steve Linstrom
55 Livingston Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55107

John Marshall
3548 47th St. S., Apt. 203
Fargo, ND 58104

Wendy McKinney
410 N. 7th Street
Marshall, MN 56258

Ellen Pagel
601 W. Railroad Street
Lynd, MN 56157

Brian D. Pehrson
PO Box 25
Russell, MN 56169

Sarah E. Pittman
311 Walnut St.
Halstead, KS 67056

Dallas Reese
496 Park Street
Tracy, MN 56175

Brian Roberts
2284 Co. Road 7
Marshall, MN 56258

Jennifer Scheler
229 1st St. W. Apt. 3
Canby, MN 56220

John G. Schreier
1106 Hackberry Dr.
Marshall, MN 56258

Martha Sharp
4400 Jim Mitchell Trail E.
Colleyville, TX 76034

David J. Sturn
1243 St. Highway 23
Florence, MN 56170

Paul Thornton
53848 Yellow Banks Dr.
Hinckley, MN 55037

Phone Number Update



In order to best serve our members, Lyon-Lincoln Electric requires accurate telephone contact information.

In many cases cell phones have replaced landlines, and the information we have on file may no longer be accurate.

Please fill out the "Change of Address/Phone Number" portion on your next payment stub OR Call our office at 1-800-927-6276 or 1-507-247-5505 so that we can be sure that we have current and accurate contact information.

With all of these ways to get information to you, we hope you won't be left in the dark the next time we have a planned outage.

Clean Up Your Account



Keeping your contact info. current helps us make sure we can reach you if your account needs attention, and helps us identify you when you report an outage.



If you are not yet enrolled, visit llec.coop & sign up for SmartHub! With just a few steps you can access your account, pay bills, and monitor energy use. You can also update account information.



Go green this year and enroll in paper-less billing. Both secure and convenient, paperless billing provides you with the information you need regarding your account no matter where you are!



South Dakota's Century Farms

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

Soukup Homestead: Raising families and farmers for over 125 years

Nestled in the heart of southcentral South Dakota lies a cherished piece of land with a name that's been long-established in Charles Mix County – the Soukup Homestead.

Almost anyone with Wagner ties knows a Soukup.

There are even a few members of the Soukup family who are also part of South Dakota's rural electric cooperative family, including Charles Mix Electric District 1 Director Denise Soukup.

But it all had to start somewhere, and good things take time.

That was the case for the Soukup's Century Farm and the Gronseth/Fiegel/Nelson/Evans homestead, a farm located near Britton that's served by Lake Region Electric.

Really, it's a common theme for Century Farm families to be located within rural electric cooperative service areas.

The South Dakota Farm Bureau and the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources began the Century Farm Program in 1984 to recognize farm and ranch families who have kept the farm in the family for 100 years or more.

Farms reaching the milestone of 125 years, known as

Quasquicentennial Farms, and the venerable Sesquicentennial Farms, marking an impressive 150 years, are also given their due recognition.

With over 3,000 families honored to date, the program continues to shine a light on the enduring legacy of South Dakota's agricultural heritage. To qualify for these prestigious honors, farms must encompass at least 80 acres and provide documented proof of their original purchase date. That means a family member must have always had ownership of the land over the last 100 years, including during the Great Depression and Dust Bowl.

The annual award presentation is a cherished tradition held at the South Dakota State Fair.

After migrating with family from what is now known today as the Czech Republic in the late 1800s, Joseph and Mary Soukup



Tom Soukup stands beside his Farmall Red International Harvester 460 tractor. *Photo courtesy of Linda Soukup*

came to the Dakota Territory at a time when most of the land open for settlement had already been settled.

While living in Tabor with family, Joseph Soukup applied for a homestead on reservation land that was now open for settlement at the U.S. Land Office in town of Mitchell on Jan. 30, 1896.

"In the following five years he built a frame house 13 feet by 18 feet in order to establish a residence, then a grainery, a corn crib, and he also fenced in 80 acres," said Linda Soukup, the wife of Tom Soukup. Her husband is Joseph and Mary's grandson.

Joseph and Mary raised ten children on the very homestead that Tom and Linda raised their kids.

"There's a lot of pride in the heritage and the legacy of, you know, having it passed down," Linda said. A new house was built on the site of Joseph and Mary's original home's structure in 1952.

That's where Tom and Linda lived and became the third generation to live on the homestead.

"When we lived here and Tom's parents and their brothers and sisters used to all come here," Linda said, as she started walking towards one of the farm buildings on the property referred to as "the shed."

"And they would butcher hogs and cattle and we would process them down there. We had a meat cooler in the basement. And then one of the families owned the meat saw and one owned the sausage stuffer," she recalled. "That was always kind of what we did until, well, families got bigger, and you couldn't. You just couldn't keep up, you know? We could have had a critter in there all the time," she said.

Tom and Linda raised their children – Becky, David, Kathy and Mary – in the house as well.

Their son David works as a project engineer for Phillips Petroleum in Texas. Two of their daughters live in different towns but remain relatively close to the homestead.

Kathy Jaeger lives in Tyndall and Mary Ringling lives in Platte. In 1996, their daughter Becky and her husband, Mike

Brunsing were living in Montana when Tom and Linda decided to move into town, so in 1998 the Brunsings moved back to South Dakota and began helping Tom on the farm while living in the house.

Becky raised three children of her own in the house she grew up in herself.

Becky and Mike still live on the homestead but in a more recently built home.

Now her son Dylan, 28, is raising his own family in the 1952 farmhouse.

In doing so, he became the fifth generation on the homestead.

Dylan and his wife, Keely, have two sons – a 20-month-old and an infant born in late March.

After 126 years, Torger Gronseth's homestead continues to bring family together.

It's hard for Carol Evans to put into words how she feels when she reflects on the 126 years of history of her family's farm in Marshall County.

"It's so important to us," Evans said. Then she takes pause.

"I'm sorry, it's emotional for me," she says, before telling her family's – and the farm's – origin story.

In 1872, her great grandfather, Torger Gronseth, immigrated to America from Norway at only 14 years old.

He made the trip to join his eldest brother in Minnesota. He officially "staked his claim" and homesteaded in the Pleasant Valley Township of Marshall County in 1901.

Over the next two decades, Torger and his wife, Berthe Lea, amassed over 960 acres of undeveloped land in the Coteau de Prairie of northeastern South Dakota.

To each of their six children, Torger bequeathed a quarter of land.

The pioneering couple sold a quarter to their daughter, Louise, upon her marriage to George Fiegel for \$1.

While they were building the house that Carol and Frank Evans now call home, the Fiegels welcomed their first child.

"All of them were born in that house built in 1920. The first born was born on

the actual homestead. The house was being built when my first aunt was born," Evans said.

Louise and George owned the house and quarter of land until 1972, at which point ownership was passed onto their daughter Joyce and her husband Orvin Nelson.

"We bought the house in 2011. Last year after my mom passed, we were able to buy the entire quarter," she recalled.

Carol and Frank then got to work refurbishing the 800-square-foot house.

The Evans live in Arizona in the fall, winter, and spring months, but spent years renovating the farmhouse over the course of several summers.

"We go back in May every year, and we've renovated the house from the chimney to the basement," Evans said.

Their summer stay at the farm begins with the help of Lake Region Electric Association.

"The first thing we do when we get there is turn the power on. Then we turn the water on and then we mow," she said.

The week over the Fourth of July holiday is especially meaningful to Carol. That's when her grandchildren make their pilgrimage back to the Gronseth/Fiegel/Nelson/Evans homestead.

"They're always here around Fort Sisseton Days," Evans said.

The traditional agenda for the kiddos also includes picnics at Roy Lake, routine farm work, and touching up the paint on an American Flag pallet display located at the base of Torger Gronseth's tombstone.

"Every one of the kids has learned how to drive when they're back in South Dakota – because it's safe," Evans said.

Evans ensures the next generation knows their family history.

"They know their great grandpa was only 14 years old when he left Norway. The strength of the person to do that – the longevity of our genetic background, the struggle, and the fact that we're so fortunate – are something they'll understand," Evans said.

"And that it's home. It's never going to the farm. It's going home."

ENERGY SCAMS

WIN MONEY

FIND YOUR NAME & MEMBER #

The tradition of listing member names and numbers in the newsletter continues in the Co-op Connections. If you find your name and member number, call the office and let us know and you will receive a \$20 energy credit.

In last month's Co-op Connections, Dulcey & Chad Magnussen & Andrew Lasnetski were listed and will receive an energy credit if they spotted their names and called the office. Once again, there are two new names and numbers hidden in this issue. Good Luck!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH

Did you know ceiling fans can help you save energy? Ceiling fans create a windchill effect on your skin to make you feel a few degrees cooler. Raise the thermostat a few degrees and turn on fans to reduce air conditioning costs.

Set fan blades to rotate counter clockwise during summer months and clockwise during winter months. Remember, ceiling fans cool people but don't actually lower the indoor temperature. Turn them off when you leave the room.

Source: energystar.gov

Energy Scams: UNMASKED

Consumers with water, gas and electricity connections have long been targets for utility scams. But in today's digital world, every swipe and click increases the risk of potential scams.

Scammers are more sophisticated than ever before, and they understand our increasing reliance on technology. With their sharpened digital knives, scammers have adapted their tactics to trick unsuspecting consumers through a variety of methods.

Lyon-Lincoln Electric wants to help you avoid energy scams, whether a financial loss or leak of your personal information by sharing updates on some of the latest utility scams, as well as tips to help you stay safe from even the craftiest scammers.

Recent Utility Scams

Scammers typically disguise themselves, either physically or digitally, as utility employees or representatives to steal consumers' money or personal information. A common trick is to claim a consumer's bill is past due and threaten to disconnect service if payment isn't received immediately. Scammers approach consumers through a variety of means, including phone calls, text messages, emails and even in-person visits. However, the digital line of attack is increasingly more common.

For example, new capabilities disguising caller ID or "spoofing" can make the phone number you see on caller ID appear to be from a trusted source. Spoofing makes it easier for scammers to deceive you because it's more difficult to immediately verify the call. Another recent scam uses fraudulent websites that are identical to a utility payment webpage— and what's worse, these pages are often promoted on search engines to trick consumers into clicking and making a payment.

Another recent scam involves phone calls, text messages or emails claiming you overpaid your electric bill and will receive a cash or banking refund. Michael Lenertz - 1418101. This offer may seem too good to be true, and it is— it's likely a scam aimed at stealing your personal information.

Spotting a Scam

There are several red flags you can watch for to identify an energy scam:

Scammers often use high-pressure tactics to create a sense of urgency, like claiming your electricity or other services will be disconnected if a payment isn't made immediately.

Additionally, scammers may ask for unusual payment methods such as gift cards or cryptocurrency. If someone is pushing for an unusual payment method, it's likely a scam.

You've probably noticed that many digital scams, like emails or text messages, include poor grammar, spelling errors and odd email addresses. These are red flags, so when you see these dodgy forms of communication, consider it a potential scam.

SIGNS OF AN

ENERGY SCAM**High-Pressure Tactics**

Scammers will pressure you, creating a sense of urgency. Claims that your power will be disconnected without immediate payment are common with utility scams.

Sketchy Payment Methods

Scammers may ask for unusual payment methods like gift cards or cryptocurrency. In these cases, it's likely a scam.

Dodgy Communication

Whether an email, text message or letter, utility scams typically include poor grammar, spelling errors or unusual email addresses. These are common warning signs of a scam.

**What Lyon-Lincoln Electric Will (and Won't) Do**

Lyon-Lincoln Electric will not demand an instant, immediate payment and threaten to disconnect your service without prior notices or warnings. We strive to resolve challenging situations and work with our members to avoid disconnects.

Lyon-Lincoln Electric will never ask for your Social Security number or other private details over the phone or through email. We offer several secure payment options, including in-person, online at llec.coop, and scheduled payments through SmartHub.

Avoiding Scams

Whether in-person, over the phone or online, always be suspicious of an unknown individual claiming to be a cooperative employee requesting banking or other personal information. If you're ever in doubt about a potential energy scam, just

give us a quick call at 800-927-6276 or 507-247-5505 so we can assist you. Lyon-Lincoln Electric wants to help protect you and our community against utility frauds, and by notifying us about potential scams, you can create the first line of defense. We encourage you to report any potential scams so we can spread the word and prevent others in our community from falling victim.

MARCH OUTAGE REPORT
10 OR MORE CONSUMERS

3/15/24- 69 consumers were off 2 hours 40 minutes in Grandview and Fairview Townships. The cause was an underground fault.

3/18/24- 230 consumers were off 1 hour 25 minutes Coon Creek, Island Lake and Lyons Townships. The cause was an underground fault.



REBUILDING HABITATS

Beavers provide many environmental benefits including drought resilience, flood control and wildlife habitat. *Photo Credit: Richard Hamilton Smith.*

BEAVER-INSPIRED STREAM RESTORATION

Frank Turner

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Centuries ago, the arrival of European traders in North America marked the beginning of a multi-century hunt for furs. The pelt of the North American beaver was at the forefront of this fur trade, prized for its use in crafting felt hats. These stylish hats fueled an ever-increasing demand for beaver furs that persisted for centuries, leading to a severe decline in beaver populations. By the early 1900s, beavers had become critically endangered, nearly vanishing from the expansive wetlands across the continent.

As the beavers dwindled, so did their dams. Lazy streams and rivers, once

tamed by beaver dams, began to flow more rapidly. The disappearance of the dams caused waterways to narrow and floodplains essential to willow trees and cottonwoods to vanish. The loss of these beaver-engineered habitats set the stage for the significant erosion of precious prairie lands.

In 2020, The Nature Conservancy set out to combat these issues by launching a project in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, South Dakota State University and local conservation agencies to restore stream health in western South Dakota.

“Our West River streams make up a small percentage of the total landscape – just under two percent of our total acreage is stream and valley

bottom,” said Lori Brown, riparian health program manager with The Nature Conservancy. “Yet, nearly everything in the prairie depends on these streams, including us in our rural communities.”

Prior to launching the project, The Nature Conservancy engaged local landowners in discussions to best understand their challenges and needs. During the discussions, several landowners faced similar issues: streams were eroding the land, fence lines were being washed away, and the water table was too low. Despite having effective tools for managing grasslands, landowners lacked the means to best maintain healthy streams.

“We needed to explore options

that any landowner could implement – strategies that didn't require a hydrologist to implement or an engineer to design," Brown said. "Our ranchers and landowners are some of the best stewards of the land. A lot of them are hungry for information and tools that can help them help the land."

The solution was simple, inspired by the ingenious works of an aquatic rodent: an artificial beaver dam. After all, if a beaver can engineer a dam, why can't a landowner?

Known as beaver analog devices, these simple speedbump-like structures quickly became integral to a broader strategy known as process-based restoration, a method that uses nature to help nature. Composed of locally sourced sticks, rocks and mud, beaver analog devices replicate a key natural process once performed naturally by beavers centuries ago. When established correctly, they filter water,

slow fast-flowing streams, and even recreate floodplains.

After settling on a solution, The Nature Conservancy set out to implement the idea in the real world, working with 10 landowners to help build and record the effects of the simulated beaver dams.

"Every day that I go out to one of these sites and I see that the beaver dams that we have built aren't totally washed out, it absolutely amazes me," Brown said. "I've read the manuals and I know how it's supposed to work, but I'm always in awe at what we are able to accomplish with the right building blocks in place."

After four years of the project, Brown said there is a lot to be excited about as the benefits of the project are evident. Signs of stream restoration are well underway. Sediment is accumulating rather than eroding, and revitalized floodplains are sprouting new willow trees.

"Without any planting on our part, woody species are now returning to these stream channels," Brown said. "The next step will be to lean into the success of this project. We want to act as a support for our conservation partners and other interested landowners that want to see their stream condition improve on their properties."

Others have been inspired by demonstrations led by The Nature Conservancy and other conservation organizations in the state to take action to slow down and hold water.

"We are just starting to see some of the effects from our outreach and education side of this project," said Brown. "The most rewarding part of this effort has been hearing the stories from local ranchers and landowners and hearing them get excited about the project."



A rock structure installed to help prevent headcuts from eroding upstream reaches. *Photo Credit: Joe Dickie, Generation Photography, Inc.*

REDUCE YOUR ENERGY USAGE TO HELP

BEAT THE PEAK

Turn off and unplug any unnecessary lights or electronics



Use curtains and blinds to help keep the sun out



Wait to run the dishwasher or do laundry until later in the evening



Set your thermostat a few degrees higher

Safe Electricity.org®**YEAR-TO-DATE COMPARISON**

FEBRUARY 2024

	Feb.- 2023	Feb.- 2024
Total Revenue	\$2,080,000	\$1,987,728
Cost of Power	\$998,362	\$1,168,716
Operating Expenses	\$755,876	\$865,831
Operating Margins	\$325,762	\$(46,819)
KWH's Purchased	21,022,317	19,555,462
Services in Place	4,123	4,128
Miles of Line	1,670	1,671
Revenue per Mile	\$1,246	\$1,190

HEAT UP THE GRILL**TO SAVE ENERGY THIS SUMMER****Nothing screams summer more than firing up the grill.****The good news is that using your grill in the great outdoors helps lower your energy bill. If you cook outside, less energy is needed to cool your kitchen.**

- Nearly 70% of Americans own a grill.
- The Fourth of July is the most popular holiday for outdoor cooking.
- The hamburger is the favorite item to grill.
- The all-American hot dog gets the most votes from kids.
- More men grill than women.
- Grilling and barbecuing are not the same thing.
- Grilling means cooking over a fire, hot and fast.
- Barbecuing means cooking slowly over indirect heat.



Source: Breo Box



A Delicious & Energy-Friendly Option for Cooking

Grilling and America go together like hot dogs, baseball and apple pie. There's nothing like a sizzling grill on a summer day. But guess what? Grilling not only satisfies our cravings for great food but also helps preserve the environment. So, let's fire up the grill and save energy!

THE COST OF STAYING COOL

As refreshing as it is to feel the cool breeze of an air conditioner on a hot summer day, its energy Consumption can be hefty. Depending on the model, it can consume as much energy as a marathon runner (and run almost non-stop), using anywhere from 0.48 to 5.14 kWh per hour. That is enough to make anyone break a sweat.

Did you know that millions of people add to their AC's energy consumption without realizing it? How? By opening the oven door while cooking. According to the book "Bakewise" by Shirley O. Corriher, an oven can lose up to 150 degrees within 30 seconds. Where does all that heat go? You guessed it — right into your home. Plus, even with the door closed, your oven still radiates heat into your home since it has nowhere else to go.

THE SOLUTION: GRILLING

If you are looking to maintain a cool vibe and lower your AC's energy consumption, head outside to the grill. Rather than generating heat indoors, the heat is dispersed outside, reducing strain on the AC, which ultimately lowers utility bills. Additionally, you will be chowing down in no time like a true grill master, as grills reach a toasty 375 degrees in just 5 minutes. Compare that to the oven's sluggish 20-minute warm-up, and you'll be laughing all the way to the butcher shop.



KEEPING YOUR GRILL CLEAN

Grills should undergo deep cleaning once or twice per year. Follow these steps to keep your gas grill in prime condition:

- Burn away buildup: Turn on the grill, close the lid and set the heat to maximum for at least 30 minutes. This process will eliminate any remaining grease or food debris.
- Scrub it clean: In a bowl, mix warm water with soap and dip a wire brush into the mixture. Scrub the grates to remove any carbon buildup.
- Let it cool: Allow the grill to cool down completely before storing it. Now your grill is ready for your next barbecue feast.
- Regular maintenance: In between uses, preheat your grill and then scrape it off with a wire-bristled brush before adding food.

TIPS FOR SAFE GRILLING

Make sure your next BBQ extravaganza is a sizzling success without any burns or mishaps. Here are some safety tips to follow:

- Take it outside. Only use grills in the great outdoors.
- Keep your grill at least 10 feet from any buildings or structures.
- Make sure your grill is on a flat, steady surface.
- Stay close. Never leave your grill unattended while preheating, cooking or cooling down.
- Dress for success. Avoid loose or long clothing that can catch fire.
- Keep a water spray bottle beside your grill to tackle any little flames that flare up quickly.
- Keep your cool with a fire extinguisher nearby, just in case.

HAPPY GRILL, HAPPY LIFE

In addition to keeping it clean, it is also important to regularly check the propane tank and replace it if necessary. Inspect the hoses and connections for any leaks or damage. Make sure the burners are free of debris and functioning properly. Darwin J. Towne - 1499700. Finally, covering your grill when not in use can help protect it from the elements and prolong its lifespan.

Menu options are truly endless when it comes to grilling. Grab your apron, fire up the grill and get ready to impress your friends and family with your grilling skills while saving energy.

JUNE 12-JULY 20, 2024
Prairie Repertory Theatre
Summer Season
 Oscar Larson Performing
 Arts Center
 Brookings, SD
 605-688-6045



To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

MAY 31-JUNE 2
Lake Andes Fish Days
 Citywide
 Lake Andes, SD

MAY 31-JUNE 2
Fort Sisseton Historical Festival
 11907 434th Ave.
 Lake City, SD
 605-910-4465

JUNE 1
LaFramboise Island Bike Race
 10:30 a.m.
 S. Poplar Ave.
 Pierre, SD
 605-222-0338

JUNE 1
Annual Casey Tibbs Match of Champions
 Stanley County Fairgrounds
 Fort Pierre, SD
 605-494-1094

JUNE 1-2
We Love Locals Weekend
 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
 Keystone, SD

JUNE 1-2
South Dakota Veg Fest
 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
 The Good Earth Farm
 Lennox, SD
 605-929-7394

JUNE 1-2
Deadwood Mickelson Trail Marathon
 Trailhead at Engine House
 Deadwood, SD

JUNE 6-9
Wheel Jam
 South Dakota State
 Fairgrounds
 Huron, SD
 605-353-7340

JUNE 7-9
Family Fun Weekend
 Wylie Park
 Aberdeen, SD
 605-626-7015

JUNE 8
Grace's Gas-Guzzlers Car Show, Carnival & Silent Auction
 Grace Lutheran Church
 Watertown, SD

JUNE 9
Brookings Car Show
 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
 Pioneer Park
 Brookings, SD

JUNE 12-13
Rangeland & Soil Days Contest
 Codington County Extension Building
 Watertown, SD

JUNE 20
Prairie Partners Master Gardeners Garden Walk
 Aberdeen, SD

JUNE 22-23
"Our Place: 15 Years of Onaka" Photography Exhibit
 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat.
 12-4p.m. Sunday
 Onaka Community Hall
 Onaka, SD

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

JULY 26-28
Clear Lake Days
 ClearLakeDays.com
 Clear Lake, SD

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