

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## From Cows to Canvas

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## Maintaining Reliable electricity



**Tim O'Leary**  
General Manager

This month's article will continue the discussion on the upcoming electric rate increase that will take effect on May 1, 2024. The change will be reflected on the bills that are received the first week of June. As with any rate decision, the decision was made after lengthy discussions over several months with the idea of meeting the cooperative's mission of providing safe and reliable electricity to our member-owners. The increase will be the first increase in rates since January 1, 2017.

We have seen several challenges over the last 7 years including several severe storms, material supply challenges, inflation in all parts of the business, higher interest rates and increasing power costs. The utility industry is seeing additional regulatory and other energy policies which will continue to add costs in the near future as well. Recent legislation that mandates power generation can only come from carbon free generating facilities are leading to the early retirement of base load generation facilities. The facilities that are closing are not being replaced fast enough, which has led to reliability agencies warning about rolling blackouts.

I will use next month's newsletter to touch on these issues and provide our perspective on how they may affect the cost and reliability of electricity in the future. Energy security, reliability, and affordability should not be a partisan issue and we look forward to working with our elected officials to fix the issues in recently passed legislation.

For a majority of our members, their electric bills have two rate components. A monthly fixed charge which is the minimum amount needed to serve each location whether the location uses electricity or not. With the rate increase, the cooperative will collect 60% of the cost to serve each single and three phase location, excluding any large or special rate schedules. By only collecting 60% of the cost to serve each location, the remaining 40% is then collected in the energy rate. You will notice how this impacted the single-phase rate differently than the three-phase rate with this adjustment.

The table below shows the rate comparison from our current rate and the rates approved for implementation effective May 1st, 2024 for farm and residential single-phase, three-phase, electric heat and controlled air conditioning. These rates impact the majority of our members. Tools are available in the SmartHub app to help manage and monitor energy usage. To access SmartHub services, [sign up at www.llec.coop](http://www.llec.coop)

Service Type	Current Base Charge	Current Rate per kWh	May 1st Base Charge	May 1st Rate per kWh
General Service Single Phase	\$40 Access Charge	\$0.1026	\$41 Access Charge	\$0.1138
General Service Three Phase	\$60 Access Charge	\$0.0980	\$82 Access Charge	\$0.1030
Electric Heat Rate- (Oct.- Apr.)	\$1 Sub Meter Charge	\$0.0600	\$1 Sub Meter Charge	\$0.0650
Controlled Air Conditioning- (May- Sep.)	\$1 Sub Meter Charge	\$0.0700	\$1 Sub Meter Charge	\$0.0800

The new rates take effect on May 1st, 2024 and will be reflected on billing statements received in June, 2024.

### DISTRICT AND ANNUAL MEETING DATES

## 2024

**District 1 - Monday, April 8th at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Tyler - Lyon-Lincoln Electric Headquarters**

**District 2 - Tuesday, April 9th at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Russell - Russell Community Center**

**NEW LOCATION**

**District 3 - Thursday, April 11th at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Hendricks - Gatsby's Banquet Room**

**Annual Meeting - Wednesday, June 5th, 2024**  
**Lyon-Lincoln Electric Headquarters**

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, rate increases are difficult for everyone and are something that are only done when needed to maintain financial stability at the cooperative level and allow us to continue to update and upgrade distribution facilities to provide our members with reliable electric services. If you are experiencing difficulty paying your electric bill, please contact the office to learn more about efficiency programs and bill options that are available.

We will continue this conversation at the district meetings in April and at our annual meeting which is scheduled for June 5, 2024.



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

(ISSN 1540-6989)

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**www.llec.coop**

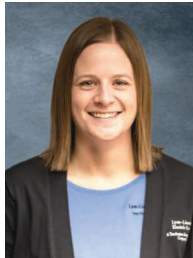
Lyon-Lincoln Electric hours are  
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM Mon. thru Fri.

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**Jessica Gums, Editor**

## Capital Credit Allocation Notices



**Kristi Jensen**  
Finance Manager

If you purchased energy from Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. in 2023, you will notice a special note on your February billing statement about capital credits. It simply says, "Capital Credit Allocation for 2023."

It will then list your 2022 ending balance, your 2023 retirements made, your 2023 allocated amount and then your 2023 ending balance. If you have more than one account, the amounts from all your accounts were combined and the total allocation appears on only your main membership account.

Former Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. members who purchased energy in 2023 and are now inactive were mailed a separate capital credit allocation statement.

The amount of capital credits allocated to you as a member of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. represents your share of the cooperative's 2023 margins, or payments in excess of expenses. These margins were allocated to Lyon-Lincoln Electric members based on the total amount of electric energy billed in 2023. Margins may be used by the cooperative for operating capital, necessary reserves, and other contingencies.

The capital credit amount is an assignment of capital credits and not an indication of immediate payment. Capital credits will be paid to the members as determined by the Lyon-Lincoln Electric Board of Directors according to bylaw provisions. You can save this billing statement for your records. Please be sure to notify us of any address changes.

Page 1 of 2	
Statement Date	03/01/2024
Account Number	12345600
Payment Due	03/20/2024
Service Summary	
Previous Balance	162.00
Payment Received	Thank you 162.00 CR
Balance Forward	0.00
Current Charges Due 03/20/24	150.00
<b>Total Amount Due</b>	<b>150.00</b>
<b>After the 20th Pay</b>	<b>154.50</b>
Current month's bill is subject to 3 percent late fee.	
<b>**Capital Credit Allocation for 2023**</b>	
Patronage for 2023 is \$3,389.42	
Capital Credit Balance Status:	
2022 Balance...: \$4,160.76	
2023 Retirement: \$46.67	
2023 Allocation: \$282.63	
2023 Balance...: \$4,396.72	
Above Allocations cannot be applied against any amount owed to the cooperative.	

**YEAR-TO-DATE COMPARISON**

NOVEMBER 2023

	Nov.- 2022	Nov.- 2023
Total Revenue	\$9,883,320	\$10,010,266
Cost of Power	\$5,291,194	\$5,682,178
Operating Expenses	\$4,067,338	\$3,960,051
Operating Margins	\$524,788	\$368,037
KWH's Purchased	91,873,513	92,678,046
Services in Place	4,125	4,124
Miles of Line	1,670	1,671
Revenue per Mile	\$5,918	\$5,991

**DECEMBER OUTAGE REPORT**

10 OR MORE CONSUMERS

12/25/23- 45 consumers were off 2 hours and 35 minutes in the City of Lynd. The cause was trees in the line from ice that opened OCR in the Lynd Sub.

12/25/23- 12 consumers were off 3 hours and 30 minutes in Lyons Township. The cause was a tree branch in line from ice.

12/25/23- 72 consumers were off 4 hours and 50 minutes in Coon Creek and Island Lake Townships. Shawn Remme - 1183301. The cause was a tree branch in the line from ice.

12/25/23- 15 consumers were off 5 hours and 25 minutes in Amiret and Island Lake Townships. The cause was a tree branch in the line from ice.

# Make Fall Safety a Top Priority

It may come as a surprise that the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death is falls. In 2021, 44,686 people died in falls at home and at work, according to Injury Facts®. For working adults, depending on the industry, falls can be the leading cause of death.

### Falls are 100% Preventable

March is Ladder Safety Month. Whether working from a ladder, roof or scaffolding, it's important to plan ahead, assess the risk and use the right equipment. First, determine if working from a height is absolutely necessary or if there is another way to do the task safely.

- Discuss the task with coworkers and determine what safety equipment is needed
- Make sure you are properly trained on how to use the equipment
- Scan the work area for potential hazards before starting the job
- Make sure you have level ground to set up the equipment
- If working outside, check the weather forecast; never work in inclement weather
- Use the correct tool for the job, and use it as intended
- Ensure stepladders have a locking device to hold the front and back open
- Always keep two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand on the ladder
- Place the ladder on a solid surface and never lean it against an unstable surface
- A straight or extension ladder should be one foot away from the surface it rests on for every four feet of height and extend at least three feet over the top edge
- Securely fasten straight and extension ladders to an upper support
- Wear slip-resistant shoes and don't stand higher than the third rung from the top
- Don't lean or reach while on a ladder, and have someone support the bottom
- Never use old or damaged equipment; check thoroughly before use

### Fall Hazards at Home

Are you a weekend warrior or do-it-yourselfer? If you take on home improvement or other weekend projects, it's important to prepare yourself for physical exertion, especially if you've been sedentary through the winter months, and take extra precautions to prevent falls.

Risky projects, like installing siding, gutters or roofs, are best left to professionals. Saving money isn't worth risking a debilitating or fatal fall.

At home or at work, many of the same rules apply. When taking on a project:

- Practice all of the ladder safety tips mentioned above
- Keep the work area clear of hazards and immediately clean up spills
- Read all instructions and safety precautions on your equipment
- Don't wear loose clothing that can get caught in equipment

We tend to think we're always safe on flat ground, but the thousands of injuries each year tell us otherwise.

- Falls are the #1 cause of death for older adults; fall-proof your home
- Keep floors and surfaces clear of clutter
- Keep file cabinets and desk drawers closed
- Keep electrical and phone cords out of traffic areas
- Install handrails on stairways
- Wear sensible footwear
- Never stand on chairs, tables or any surface with wheels
- Properly arrange furniture to create open pathways
- Maintain good lighting indoors and out

More than 6.9 million people were treated in emergency rooms for fall-related injuries in 2021. A fall can end in death or disability in a split second, but with a few simple precautions, you'll be sure stay safe at home and at work.

*Source: National Safety Council*



### Trim Your Trees

#### Brace Tapio, Age 8

Brace Tapio cautions readers to trim their trees to prevent power line damage. Brace's parents are Nate and Elsa Tapio from Armour, S.D., members of Douglas Electric Cooperative.

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 SPECIALS

## CAJUN SHRIMP

### Ingredients:

1 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined  
2-3 tps. cajun seasoning  
2 tbsps. butter

### Method

Coat shrimp with seasoning. Melt butter in large skillet on medium heat. Add shrimp; cook and stir three minutes or just until shrimp turn pink. Serve over cooked rice, if desired.

**McCormick.com**

## CRAB SALAD SPREAD

### Ingredients:

8-12 oz. imitation crab meat, flake style, tear into small pieces  
1 tbsp. lemon juice  
1 cup (approx.) shredded Cheddar cheese  
1 small can black olives, sliced  
Mayo (must be Mayo), to get correct texture, less is better than too much  
1/4 to 1/2 pepper, cracked

### Method

Mix by hand. Serve with Club or Ritz crackers.

Linda Hubbard  
Rapid City, S.D.

## CREAMY SHRIMP LINGUINE

### Ingredients:

8 oz. linguine  
1 tbsp. butter  
1 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined  
1 cup heavy cream  
1 package garlic butter shrimp scampi  
2 tbsps. white wine

### Method

Cook pasta as directed on package. Drain well.

Melt butter in large skillet on medium-high heat. Add shrimp; cook and stir 2 minutes or just until shrimp turn pink. Add cooked pasta, Seasoning Mix, cream and wine. Reduce heat to medium; cook 1 to 2 minutes or until heated through, stirring occasionally. Serve with grated Parmesan cheese.

**McCormick.com**

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

# Spring Cleaning Tips to Maximize Efficiency



**Miranda Boutelle**  
Efficiency Services  
Group

**Q:** What are some energy-saving tasks I can add to my spring cleaning list?

**A:** Spring is a great time to refresh, clean and enhance energy efficiency at home. By adopting simple yet effective energy-saving strategies during our spring-cleaning routines, we can create an efficient living environment that may also lower our utility bills and extend the life of our heavily used appliances.

Be sure to include these spring cleaning tips to add some energy savings to the job.

Even though it's out of sight, don't leave it out of mind. Check the filter in your HVAC system. Your furnace worked hard during the winter. Ensuring your system has a clean filter is a low-cost and easy way to protect your equipment and maximize efficiency. A dirty furnace filter can cause your system to work harder than necessary, decreasing efficiency and shortening the system's life.

While the filter is easy to replace yourself, you should have your air conditioning serviced and professionally cleaned. Both the indoor and outdoor units should be cleaned. Dirty refrigerant coils reduce efficiency. This also applies to heat pumps and ductless heat pumps, also known as mini-split systems. The technician can check refrigerant levels and refill or repair if necessary.

HVAC contractors get busy responding to calls for repairs during the summer heat. Scheduling cleaning services for your air conditioning in the spring – before the heat of the summer – can ensure the work gets done before the rush and even save you money. Some HVAC contractors offer special discounts for cleaning services in the milder months, which helps fill their schedules and keep their technicians working.

Window AC units can get dirty, too. They can be cleaned with the proper tools, cleaning agents and know-how. Always unplug before

cleaning, and wait until completely dry to plug it back in again. Take the time to clean it properly in the spring before you need it in the summer.

Cleaning light fixtures and fixture covers can brighten your space by removing dust and grime collected during the winter. While you are at it, be sure to check your bulbs and replace any incandescent or compact fluorescent with energy-saving LEDs. Although they tend to cost a little more, LEDs last longer and use less energy.

Good-quality LED light bulbs are expected to last 30,000 to 50,000 hours, according to the Department of Energy. A typical incandescent lamp lasts about 1,000 hours, and a comparable CFL lasts 8,000 to 10,000 hours. To put this into everyday use, if you have an LED light on for 10 hours per day, it can last 13 years compared to only about three months for incandescent bulbs and about two-and-a-half years for CFLs.

Don't forget the oven. A clean oven heats more evenly and quickly, providing better results and lower energy use. A clean oven window allows you to see the food and how it's cooking without opening the oven door, which wastes energy.

If cleaning windows is on the list, check the seals and sash locks to ensure they close tightly. Check for any areas that need caulking or sealing to reduce drafts. Sealing around windows contributes to year-round comfort in your home. Clean windows also allow more light into the home, reducing the need to turn on lamps and overhead fixtures.

Spring is the ideal time to declutter, deep clean and implement practices that not only tidy our homes but also reduce energy consumption, contributing positively to our homes' energy efficiency and saving money on energy use.





# Käsemeister Creamery

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

Spink Colony's Käsemeister Creamery continues to perfect the art of cheese making while continuously looking for more ways to increase its economic footprint.

The creamery is located at a Hutterite colony about nine miles south of Frankfort, which produces over 150 types of cheese, which are sold in stores throughout the state and into North Dakota and Minnesota.

The creamery's manager, Jeremy Wipf, said the business also gets online orders regularly that go throughout the United States.

"We're always trying to get into more stores," Wipf said, which isn't easy in the competitive word of cheese and dairy products.

"The bigger creameries are our biggest competition," Wipf said. "But we're coming along. We're still growing slowly. We're only using half of our milk right now, so we will have the other half to use up. We've got room for expansion if



we could get in with a new distributor that isn't in South Dakota. There's plenty of cheese around. There's always competition."

The idea for the creamery came about in 2016. After securing a business loan, the Spink Colony bought the equipment necessary to start the business in 2018.

In fall of 2018, the creamery officially opened for business.

Käsemeister Creamery employs five full-time and 12 part-time employees from Spink Colony. "When we need more help, like when we make the cheese, we have extra help. It gets a little more difficult at times, such as harvest. During those times, we just have to do what we can and work harder and longer," Wipf said.

The creamery source 100% of the milk used to make the cheese from the colony's dairy operation, which milks around 100 cows. The cows are a three-way cross of Montbeliarde, Swedish Red, and Holstein.

"The idea behind it is a smaller cow that takes less feed but has more body fat, more protein – which at the end of the day is what pays the bills," Wipf explained.

The creamery is hoping to break into the whey industry, which would allow them to sell a byproduct from making the cheese.

"We basically have to throw away the whey right now," Wipf said.

For every 10 pounds of milk, you get one pound of cheese and nine pounds of whey, according to Wipf.

A separate facility would be needed to process the whey byproduct into whey protein, a product currently in high demand.

"But we're too small to invest in equipment for a facility. You've got to have a separate facility for processing whey. There's a lot of demand for it, but you have to have a lot for it to be feasible," Wipf said.

Creamery's current processing facility is comprised of all stainless steel machinery, which was put together by workers from the colony. A 14,700 square foot facility hosts both the processing area and retail store front.

Check out the cheeses and other products offered by Käsemeister Creamery online at [www.kasemeister.com](http://www.kasemeister.com).







Rural Artist Michelle Weber has illustrated 11 children books in addition to showcasing her art nationwide and internationally.

## Michelle Weber Captures Rural Life in Art

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

During her upbringing in Windom, Minn., Michelle Weber discovered her passion for art at a young age. She was the kid who was always doodling, often paying more attention to her drawings than to the class. Holding on to her passion, Weber took her first art class in high school with her art

teacher, Mark Nass. Although the class had a rocky start, Nass recognized her potential and helped fuel a passion that would ultimately lead Weber to becoming a prominent rural artist.

"I was a junior in high school when I enrolled in my first real art class, and to be honest, I kind of hated it," said Weber. "That first week, I was mortified that I wasn't any good."

Initially contemplating dropping the class, Weber sought a signature from her art teacher to change her art class to a study hall instead. Despite her request, Nass refused to let her drop the class and encouraged her to try give the class another chance.

"After a few weeks, everything just clicked," said Weber. "I fell in love with painting and began living in the school's art room."

In less than a year, Weber made substantial progress in her artistic abilities. Enough so, that her teacher encouraged her to apply for the Congressional Art Competition. She applied,



and her painting not only won in her district but also earned a spot in the U.S. Capitol building in Washington D.C., where it was showcased for an entire year.

Weber's success in the Congressional Art Competition foreshadowed what was to come. Drawing inspiration from her upbringing on a farm and involvement in 4-H, Weber began primarily painting livestock. In 2011, Weber's friend from Mitchell, S.D., Amanda Radke, approached her with a request to illustrate a children's book featuring livestock and rural agriculture, a perfect fit for Weber's artwork. This opportunity led to the creation of "A World With Cows," marking Weber's first foray into a full-time career as an artist.

"The book was a huge stepping stone for both of us," said Weber.

The children's book marked not only the beginning of a career but also established Weber's niche – capturing the focal point of rural life on canvas: livestock, horses, buffalo, and more. Weber has since illustrated 10 additional children's books and successfully sold her artwork both nationwide and internationally.

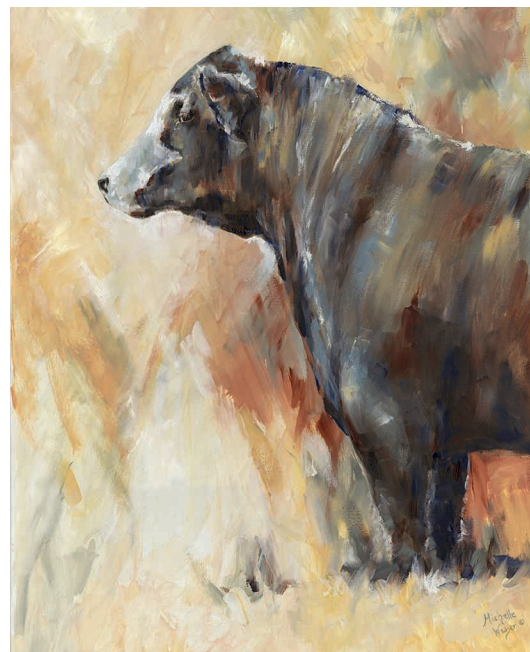
Traditionally, her oil paintings have been rooted in a realism, capturing every detail of the depicted animals. More recently, Weber has expanded her art to include a more whimsical and abstract representation of the rural lifestyle.

"My niche market is the producer, so it's important that my art reflects an authentic rural lifestyle," said Weber. "I want these paintings to have a touch of who I am, but also have the integrity of this lifestyle retained on canvas too."

Today, Weber resides just outside Lake Benton, Minn., a town just outside the South Dakota border. From her small town, Michelle Weber also maintains a website, [michelleweberstudio.com](http://michelleweberstudio.com), where she showcases a wide range of products

featuring her artwork, including prints, notecards, children's books, and even cake pans. In addition to her website, Weber recently opened a studio named, "The Studio by Michelle Weber" in the center Lake Benton.

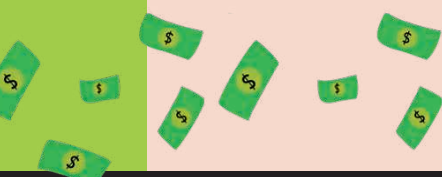
"The Studio is a space located right in the heart of Lake Benton," said Weber. "Some people look at Lake Benton with a population of less than 700 or less and ask, 'Why would you open your studio there?' But I stand behind supporting these small. They are the heartbeat of this country, so it only seemed fitting to bring it home."



A Weber painting, titled "Side Eye."



Weber is widely known for her oil paintings that capture the essence of an authentic rural lifestyle on canvas.



## 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, Tami Harris & Natalee Possail were listed and will receive an energy credit if they spot their names and call the office. Once again, there are two new names and numbers hidden in this issue. Good Luck!

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH



Lengthen the life of your clothes dryer with regular cleaning.

Clean the lint filter after every load, which improves air circulation and safety. Check the lint trap opening to ensure it's clean. Use a vacuum to remove any lint that's fallen inside the opening.

If you use dryer sheets, check the lint filter for residue buildup. Remove any residue with hot water and a nylon brush or toothbrush. Over time, dryer sheets can leave a film on the filter, which can affect the performance of the motor.

Source: energystar.gov

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Lyon- Lincoln Electric Cooperative: Board of Directors

Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors is made up of nine members from three districts. Each director serves a three-year term, after which they can run for re-election. Directors must live in the district that they represent. The Director terms are staggered so that each year a board member from each district is up for election. Members vote for one director from each district. If you would like more information pertaining to director position by-laws, turn to page 15 in this issue.

Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative is unique in that its board of directors is made up of local citizens who are also members. The policies and rates set by the Board of Directors are made in the best interests of the membership, not individuals in another state. Lyon-Lincoln's directors are typically people you may run into at a community or school event. If you have questions about the cooperative's operations, you can simply pick up the phone and call Lyon-Lincoln at 1-800-927-6276 or contact your local director representative.

## Who represents you?

### District 1-

Includes all members whose residence, farmstead or place of business is located in Ash Lake, Lake Stay, Drammen, Diamond Lake, Marshfield, Verdi, Lake Benton, and Hope townships and in the City of Arco in Lincoln County. Also included in District 1 are the townships of Coon Creek, Shelburne, and Rock Lake townships in Lyon County, Altona, Fountain Prairie, and Aetna townships of Pipestone County, and Ellsborough and Skandia townships in Murray County.

Board Members currently serving from District 1 include:  
Mary Gunnink\*, Scott Johnson, and Kathy Schreurs.

### District 2-

Includes all members whose residence, farmstead, or place of business is located in Island Lake, Lynd, Lake Marshall, Clifton, Lyons, Sodus, Amiret, Custer and Monroe townships in Lyon County as well as the Cities of Lynd and Russell.

Board Members currently serving from District 2 include:  
Joel Buyck\*, Galen Grant, and Jim Rokeh.

### District 3-

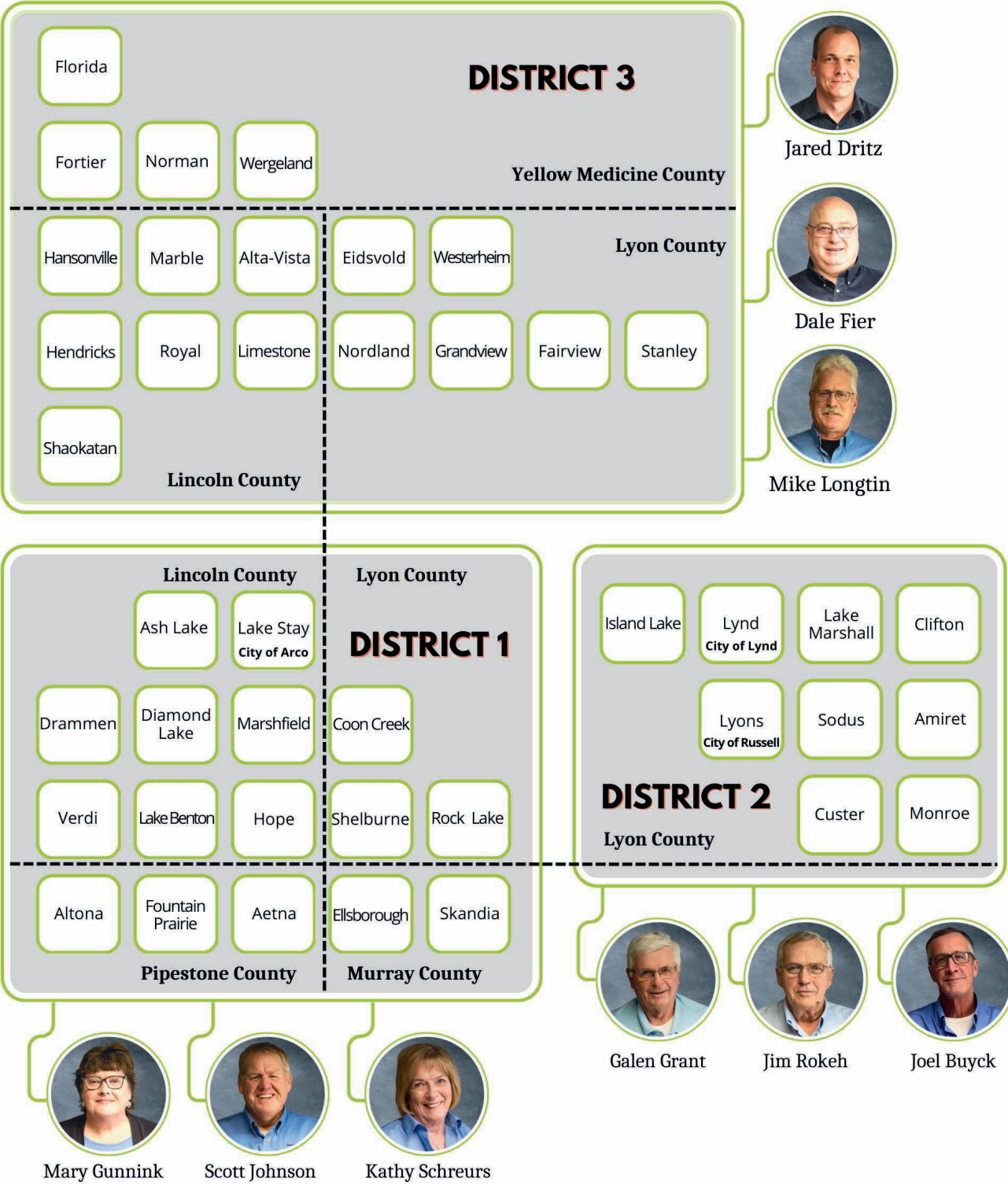
Includes all members whose residence, farmstead, or place of business is located in Florida, Fortier, Norman and Wergeland townships in Yellow Medicine County. Also included in District 3 are the townships of Hansonville, Marble, Alta Vista, Hendricks, Royal, Limestone and Shaokatan in Lincoln County, and Eidsvold, Westerheim, Nordland, Grandview, Fairview and Stanley townships in Lyon County.

Board Members currently serving from District 3 include:  
Jared Dritz\*, Dale Fier, and Mike Longtin.

**\*Term expires in 2024**



# Director Districts





Sacred Hoops Coach Tuffy Morrison is just one of many volunteer coaches who make Sacred Hoops Basketball a reality for rural athletes.

# SHOOTING FOR SUCCESS

## Sacred Hoops Basketball Scores Big with Rural Youth

**Frank Turner**

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Sacred Hoops Basketball, a nonprofit organization unique to South Dakota, has been changing the game for youth basketball across the state for more than six years. Using basketball as a tool for youth development, the program organizes teams, trains coaches, and hosts tournaments and workshops for young individuals in all communities – both big and small.

Since the program's conception, the emphasis has centered on rural engagement. Allan Bertram, the owner and operator of Sacred Hoops, co-founded the program alongside Jordan Long and a few other movers and shakers as a way to bring quality basketball instruction to students who would otherwise need to travel hundreds of miles to participate. Their goal was to make basketball accessible to all athletes across the state, not only improving their basketball skills but

also their life skills.

"We wanted to bridge the gap for kids in rural areas, particularly our athletes in low socio-economic areas who may not have been able to play basketball otherwise," said Bertram. "We want to ensure that every kid who wants to play can."

Beyond hosting tournaments and teams, Bertram and the organization's other volunteers have found other ways to make changes on and off the basketball court. In addition to hosting more than 120 high school instruction programs across the state, Sacred Hoops Basketball annually distributes more than \$70,000 in scholarships that aid athletes from low-income families to play ball. The organization was also the driving force behind a recent initiative that placed 2,000 new pairs of shoes in the hands of children from select, rural





Sacred Hoops Director and Coach Ted Standing Soldier draws up a play for the the Sacred Hoops West River Youth Team.

elementary schools in South Dakota.

“We’ve seen so many kids grow and fulfill their passion,” said Bertram. “In today’s world, our youth sometimes don’t understand what their purpose or passion is, and that’s why so many of our youth are struggling. It doesn’t matter what a kid is passionate about – it could be music, sports, gaming, or whatever – but it’s our job to help feed that passion because that is what gives those kids a purpose.”

Today, the program has expanded to encompass more than 50 dedicated volunteers and 600 athletes across 60 teams in their summer season, with athletes spanning from third grade to high school. These numbers, said Bertram, have added up to a real impact for athletes across the state. Within Sacred Hoops Basketball, more than 75 athletes have gone on to play college-level basketball.

“It gives us a great sense of pride because those kids are not only getting a post-secondary degree but also get to continue their passion by playing at the next level,” said Bertram. “Many of these kids come from rural areas or

locations.”

Sacred Hoops Basketball Director and Coach Ted Standing Soldier also emphasized the impact that the nonprofit has had on West River athletes. Standing Soldier regularly works with athletes from several rural

West River communities, including Pine Ridge, Belle Fourche, Kadoka, and more.

“We have athletes from all over come to play on one team, and it’s changing the game for these kids. We have seen several of our athletes start making junior varsity and varsity teams as middle schoolers,” said Standing Soldier. “These are kids we want to help reach their full potential, both on and off the court.”

Reflecting on his upbringing, Standing Soldier said that basketball played a significant role in his early life, ultimately leading to college scholarships that allowed him to play basketball for Platte Community College in Nebraska and later the University of Mary in North Dakota. Those opportunities, he said, are ones that he wants to share with other youth in South Dakota.

“Basketball has been a part of my entire life,” he said. “I developed a love for the game. God has used it to impact my entire life, and now I’m using it to impact others.”



The Sacred Hoops Basketball AAU West Coast National Championship Team.

# November Board Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative was held on Monday, December 18, 2023. Directors present: James Rokeh, Kathy Schreurs, Scott Johnson, Dale Fier, Mike Longtin, Jared Dritz, Joel Buyck, Mary Gunnink and Galen Grant. Also present: General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, Finance Manager, Kristi Jensen, and Attorney, Michael W. Cable.

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 November 27, 2023 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 October 31, 2023. The Board reviewed a document from East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. which described the Basin Capital Credit Retirement. Austin Sterzinger - 1536100. The Board then discussed the 2024 Budget together with the various rates charged by the Cooperative, and after discussion and review a motion was made by Mr. Grant, seconded by Mr. Longtin, and carried to approve an 8% average increase for rates as of May 1, 2024.

Lyle Lamote, Line Superintendent, gave the Outage Report to the Board for the month of November. He also indicated that there was a November Safety Meeting held on November 1, 2023 concerning the topic concerning the topic of Working on URD Lines which was conducted by Terry Ehli, MREA's Safety Instructor to train the linemen on working with URD lines. Mr.

Lamote then indicated that the linemen were doing the following work some of which had been completed and some was still in process: OCR maintenance had been finished, 1 mile three-phase underground line near Balaton is completed, linemen had started trimming trees, and were doing line patrol for the Cooperative.

Brian Jeremiason, Manager of Marketing and External Relations, reviewed his report with the board which included sharing statistics collected on the electric vehicles in the fleet operated by Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. for 2023 and indicated that the Cooperative had passed a significant milestone in October for its solar project that surpassed 100,000 kWhs produced and presented a chart which showed the monthly/annual/average solar production over the past 8 years.

The Board recessed for lunch at 12:04 P.M. and reconvened at 12:29 P.M. and during the lunch period the Board reviewed The East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. monthly video report which included the Basin Summary.

General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, then gave his manager's report; some of the items reviewed were as follows: the Board reviewed the November 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. Mr. O'Leary advised the Board that the Employee Handbook has been updated as a result of the Earned Sick and Safe Time Law that was adopted by the State of Minnesota.

The Board then reviewed the November 2023 Cyber Security Program Report

presented by East River Cyber Security Department dated November 1, 2023. The Board then reviewed the members for each District that would serve as the 2024 Nominating Committee, discussed whether or not to proceed to establish a procedure for a mail-in ballot to be provided to members who wanted to vote for directors, but were not able to attend the Annual Meeting, and Directors gave a report concerning the recent meetings they had attended and reviewed upcoming meetings and notices.

There being no further business to come before the Board, President, Dale Fier, adjourned the meeting at 1:50 pm.

## Updated Notice to Co-Generators

In compliance with Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative's adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers, whom satisfy the conditions as a qualifying facility. Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales, and purchases are subject to resolution by the Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative Board. Interested members should contact Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, PO Box 639, Tyler, MN 56178 or call 507-247-5505.



# LLEC bylaws pertaining to Director positions

## BYLAW ARTICLE III. DIRECTORS

### SECTION 1. GENERAL POWERS.

The business and affairs of the Cooperative shall be managed by a board of nine (9) directors, which shall exercise all of the powers of the Cooperative except such as are by law or by the articles of incorporation of the Cooperative or by these bylaws conferred upon or reserved to the members.

### SECTION 2. TENURE AND QUALIFICATIONS.

a) **TENURE.** At the annual meeting of the members, one director from each of the districts into which the Cooperative is divided shall be elected by ballot by and from the members for a term of three years, or until his successor shall have been elected and shall have qualified.

b) **QUALIFICATIONS.** No member who is a person, joint tenant, trustee of a member trust, or partner of a member partnership shall be eligible to become or remain a director or hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who:

1) is not a bona fide member and resident of the district from which he or she is elected or for which he or she is a candidate; ("bona fide resident" shall be defined as residing at and continuously and materially purchasing electric service at a location within any director district from which the director is elected or for which he or she is a candidate for at least nine (9) months each calendar year);

2) is in any way employed by or substantially financially interested in an enterprise substantially competing with the Cooperative or any Cooperative-affiliated business;

3) within three (3) years was a full-time or part-time employee of the Cooperative or an entity wherein the Cooperative has an ownership interest;

4) does not have the legal capacity to enter into a binding contract;

When membership is held jointly by two natural persons, either one, but not both, may be elected a director, provided, however, that neither one shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold a position of trust in the Cooperative unless both shall meet the qualifications herein above set forth.

If a corporation is a member then a duly appointed representative of said corporation can be a director if said representative is a bona fide permanent resident of the district for which he/she meets the qualification requirements listed in this section. A member that is an authorized farm corporation or family farm corporation may select an individual member residing on or actively operating the farm to be eligible for election to the board.

Upon establishment of the fact that a director is holding the office in violation of any of the foregoing provision, the Board of Directors shall remove such director from the office.

Nothing in this Section contained shall or shall be construed to affect in any manner

whatsoever, the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

### SECTION 3. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF DIRECTORS.

a) **Nomination at District Meetings.** The Board of Directors shall not less than One Hundred Twenty (120) days before the date of the meeting of the members at which Directors are to be elected, appoint a committee on nomination, which said committee shall consist of not less than three nor more than nine members who shall be selected from the three districts so as to insure equitable representation. No officer or member of the Board of Directors shall be appointed a member of the District Nominating Committee. The nominating committee shall, not less than Ninety (90) days before the meeting of the members at which directors are to be elected, nominate one or more candidates for the Board of Directors from such District, and shall by the time stated prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative a list of nominations for the Directors to be chosen from such District presented at the District Meeting by Petition of ten or more members residing in such District.

Not less than Thirty (30) days nor more than Sixty (60) days before any meeting at which directors are to be elected, the board of directors shall call a separate meeting of the members of each district at a suitable place in such district for the purpose of selecting two persons as candidates for director to represent the members located within such district. The notice of such meeting shall be given to each member located in such district as provided in Section 4 of Article II and shall indicate the district to which such member belongs. The notice shall describe the person or persons nominated by the District Nominating Committee as candidates for director to be made at the meeting. Said notice shall indicate that there may be additional names for nomination as candidates for director to be chosen from the District presented at the District Meeting by petition of ten or more members residing in said District but said additional name or names as candidates for director may only be made by said petition. The meeting shall, however, be open for discussion of any other matters pertaining to the business of the Cooperative, regardless of whether or not such matters were listed in the notice of the meeting, and recommendations with respect thereto may be submitted to the board of directors or the entire membership.

The district meeting shall be called to order by a director representing the district or by another designated representative of the board of directors, or in his absence, by any member residing within the district. The members shall then proceed to elect a chairman, who shall be someone other than a director, and who shall appoint a secretary to act for the duration of the meeting. Ten (10) members residing in the district present at such duly called district meeting shall constitute a quorum. Members of other districts present at the

meeting may be heard but shall have no vote. The candidates for director nominated by the committee and by petition shall be nominated at the meeting. Candidates must be members residing in the district and must possess the qualifications for director specified in Section 2 of Article III of these Bylaws.

Voting shall be by ballot and proxy voting shall not be permitted at any district meeting. Each member may vote for one candidate. The two candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared the official candidates of the district. The minutes of such district meeting shall set forth, among other matters, the name of each person nominated at the meeting and the number of votes received by each, and shall specify the two official candidates of the district. A certified copy of the minutes, signed by the Secretary and the Chairman of the district meeting, shall be delivered to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Cooperative within five days after such district meeting.

b) **Election of Directors.** At all meetings at which directors are to be elected, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Cooperative shall place in nomination the names of the official candidates of each district from which a director is to be elected. Additional nominations for director may not be made from the floor. Election of directors shall be by printed, photocopied, or electronic ballot. The ballots shall list the candidates selected at the district meetings, the names to be arranged by districts and in the order of preference indicated by the respective district vote. Each member of the Cooperative shall be entitled to vote for one candidate from each district from which a director is to be elected. The candidate from each such district receiving the highest number of votes at the meeting shall be declared as the director to represent such district. Voting may include voting by mail or electronic ballot as set out in Article II, Section 8. In case of a tie vote for election of the nominees to the Board, at the Member Meeting, the designated Chairperson of the Member Meeting, for the Election of Directors, shall determine the tie by lot.

If for any election there is only one nominee for each of the three board positions so that each district nominee is running unopposed, ballots need not be provided by mail or electronically to the members and the election shall be made by the designated Chairperson of the Member Meeting, for the Election of Directors, entertaining a motion to elect the single candidates by a voice vote.

The members may at any meeting at which a director or directors shall be removed as hereinbefore provided elect a successor or successors thereto without compliance with the foregoing provisions with respect to nominations provided, however, that the director or directors so chosen must reside in the same district as the director or directors in respect of whom the vacancy occurs. Notwithstanding anything in this section contained, failure to comply with any of the provisions of this section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any election of directors.



**MARCH 1-3, 2024**  
**National Pheasant**  
**Fest & Quail Classic**  
 1201 N West Ave.  
 Sioux Falls, SD

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

**MARCH 2**  
**Live on Stage**  
 High Country Guest Ranch  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 7**  
**Elevate Rapid City Economic Summit**  
 8 a.m.  
 The Monument  
 Rapid City, SD

**MARCH 9**  
**French Toast/Pancake Feed & Health Fair**  
 8:30 a.m.  
 Tea Community Building  
 Tea, SD

**MARCH 9**  
**SunCatcher Therapeutic Riding Academy & 3rd Annual Shamrock Gala**  
 5 p.m.  
 Alex Johnson Ballroom  
 Rapid City, SD

**MARCH 11-15**  
**Black Hills Institute's 50th Anniversary Celebration**  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 14-16**  
**Spring Rummage Fundraiser**  
 Spearfish Senior Center  
 Spearfish, SD

**MARCH 15**  
**East Dakota Chapter NWFT 31st Annual Banquet**  
 Ramkota Exhibit Hall  
 Sioux Falls, SD

**MARCH 15-16**  
**Badlands Quilter Weekend Getaway**  
 5:30 p.m. Friday, all day Saturday  
 Wall Community Center  
 Wall, SD

**MARCH 16**  
**Live On Stage**  
 High Country Guest Ranch  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 16**  
**South Dakota Poetry Society Poetry on the Road & Open Mic**  
 1 p.m.  
 Tri-State Museum  
 Belle Fourche, SD

**MARCH 16-17**  
**Hill City Antiques, Railroad & Collectibles Show & Sale**  
 Hill City Center  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 17**  
**St. Patrick's Day Green Pancakes and Sausage**  
 8:30 a.m.  
 RVUMC  
 Rapid City, SD

**MARCH 20-23**  
**Hill City Restaurant Week**  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 23**  
**Tyndall VFW Vegas Night**  
 7:30 p.m.  
 Tyndall Community Center  
 Tyndall, SD

**MARCH 23**  
**Hill City Children's Easter Egg Hunt**  
 Visitor Info Center  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 24**  
**Ham Dinner & Silent Auction**  
 11:45 a.m.  
 RVUMC  
 Rapid City, SD

**APRIL 2**  
**Clay-Union Electric Ribbon Cutting & Open House**  
 3 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.  
 31321 SD Hwy. 19  
 Vermillion, SD

**APRIL 5-7**  
**71st Annual Hayes Play: Under a Cowboy Moon**  
 7 p.m.  
 Hayes Community Hall  
 Hayes, SD

**APRIL 12-14**  
**The Farmer's Daughter 19th Anniversary Celebration**  
 Hill City, SD

**APRIL 14**  
**Hill City Senior Sunday Breakfast**  
 8 a.m.  
 Hill City Center  
 Hill City, SD

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