



**SIOUX VALLEY
ENERGY**
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

SIOUX VALLEY ENERGY
AUGUST 2021 VOL. 22 NO. 4

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

In pursuit of Walleye

**SD anglers on the
prowl for Walleye**
Page 8

**Living the RV
lifestyle**
Page 12



Electric Safety Needs to Be a Priority. Contact with Power Lines Can be Deadly.



Tim McCarthy
General Manager/
Chief Executive
Officer

The electric system is designed and built to be safe and efficient, providing power to our homes and businesses each and every day. It's actually a pretty impressive network of equipment that allows for electricity to be generated and distributed safely when and where you need it. But if that equipment is not respected and contact is made by a member of the public, it can become dangerous.

I won't mince words; we need both our members and the general public to be more cognizant of electric safety such as avoiding overhead and underground lines before something terrible happens.

Unfortunately, we have seen way too many public contacts of electric facilities this year. One is too many, but the number has been increasing and the type of contacts are becoming progressively more dangerous. These public contacts could result in major bodily injury or death.

IT HAS TO STOP.

I won't mince words; we need both our members and the general public to be more cognizant of electric safety such as avoiding overhead and underground lines before something terrible happens.

The key is to not take any risks around electric facilities. Not even when you only

have one hour of daylight left to get your work done or just a small hole that you plan to dig. Do not take the risk.

- Think that boom on your sprayer can make it under the line? Don't just assume—get out of the vehicle and double check your clearances.
- Can't remember if your underground lines are too close to the site you are digging? Don't make that assumption—CALL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG and take heed to those locates!
- Believe it may be a quick and easy task to do a little tree trimming yourself near electric lines? DON'T! Call Sioux Valley Energy.
- Think that downed electric line is de-energized? NO! Always assume it is live.
- Accidentally hit a line with your equipment and think you need to get off the machinery to check it? Stay put unless it's on fire and call 911. If you must get out of your vehicle because of a fire, tuck your arms across your body and jump with your feet together as far as possible from the equipment so no part of your body touches the vehicle and the ground at the same time. Move away from the vehicle with your feet together, either by hopping or shuffling, until you are at least 40 feet away.

I don't want to scare you with my message this month, because electricity is safe when used properly but take chances around electric facilities and it can become dangerous very quickly.

So please slow down and be aware of your surroundings. Don't take risks to save yourself some time. And finally, remind your family, friends and employees to do the same.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

SIoux VALLEY ENERGY

(USPS No. 497-440)

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(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

Sioux Valley Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

SIoux EMPIRE FAIR AG APPRECIATION DAY

Join Sioux Valley Energy and other Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives at the Sioux Empire Fair for Ag Appreciation Day on August 11! Tickets will not be required for the complimentary meal this year, just show up and enjoy!

JOIN US AT THE FAIR!

The 38th annual Ag Appreciation Day, hosted by the Greater Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by Touchstone Energy Cooperatives will be held Wednesday, August 11, at the W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds.

A complimentary lunch (pork sandwiches, chips and drinks) will be served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Attendees will not need a meal ticket this year.

Entertainment includes Jim Woster and live music from Mogen's Heroes. There will also be an ag panel discussion starting at 1 p.m.

Admission to the Sioux Empire Fair is free until 1 p.m. courtesy of Sioux Valley Energy and other Touchstone Energy Cooperatives.



Join us for Ag Appreciation Day

Wednesday, August 11, 2021
Lunch served 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.



Prepare to protect your devices from power surges

A power surge, or transient voltage, is a sudden and unwanted increase in voltage that can damage, degrade or destroy sensitive electronic equipment in your home or business.

The National Electrical Manufacturers Association estimates that 60–80 percent of power surges are created within a building, such as when large appliances, like air conditioners, turn on and off. Far less common are surges that originate from an electric utility during power grid switching. The most powerful surges can be caused by lightning.

A spike in voltage can be harmful to electrical devices in your home if the increase is above a device's intended operating voltage. This excess voltage can cause an arc of electrical current resulting in heat that damages electrical components. Repeated small-scale surges may slowly damage your electronic equipment and shorten its life span.

Surge Protection Options - Consider protecting your devices and appliances with surge protection. Several levels of protection are available to consumers.

Point-of-use surge protectors protect only the items that are directly plugged into the device. They do not suppress or arrest a surge but divert the

surge to ground. Use point-of-use surge protectors that have an indicator light or audible alarm that alerts you when the surge protector needs replacement.

Service entrance surge protection devices are mounted in or on your main electrical panel or at the base of the electric meter and provide protection for your entire electrical system. These devices cover components that cannot be connected to a point-of-use device, such as outlets and light switches.

Power strips do NOT provide surge protection. Be sure you are relying on the appropriate device for protection.

And remember, power strips and surge suppressors don't provide more power to a location, only more access to the same limited capacity of the circuit into which it is connected. Be careful not to overload the circuit.

Unfortunately, no surge protection device on the market can handle a direct lightning strike. The best way to gird against surges caused by storms is to unplug devices.

SUMMER MEMORIES

Send us your favorite summer photos!



As we approach the end of summer, *Cooperative Connections* would love to see your favorite memories of the season captured in pixels.

We're holding a photo contest called "Summer Memories." Send us your top shot and you could be eligible to win a \$50 gift card!

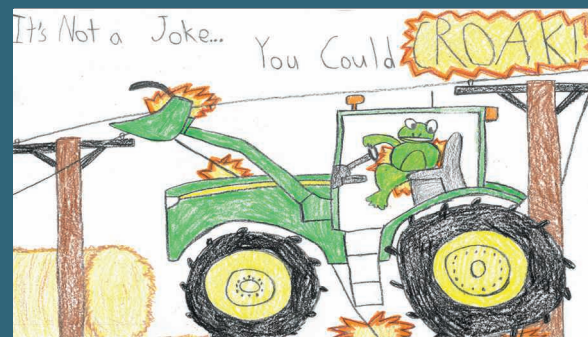
Here are the rules:

- One photo per entrant;
 - The deadline for entry is Aug. 27;
 - Finalist photos will appear in the October issue of *Cooperative Connections*;
 - Send your entry to editor@sdrea.coop.
- Good luck!

Hope Haven fundraising event Sept. 11

Hope Haven will hold a fundraising event on Sept. 11 at Talsma's Trail Park in Avon. The organization offers services and support for children, adults and families, including physical, mental, intellectual, residential, vocational and spiritual needs. For more information, visit www.hopehaven.org.

Hope Haven was misidentified in the July issue of *Cooperative Connections*.



It's not a joke...you could croak!

Creighton Werning, 4th Grade

Creighton is a fourth grade student at Parkston. He and his family live in Emery and are members of Southeastern Electric.

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

PERFECT PASTA

PAPPARDELLE

Ingredients:

Salted water
 3 tbsp olive oil
 3 tbsp shallots, minced
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1/4 tsp chili flakes
 1 cup white wine
 2 cups pappardelle noodles
 3/4 cup vegetable stock
 3 tbsp capers (optional)
 2 vine-ripened tomatoes, sliced in wedges
 1 handful baby kale
 1 fresh lemon, juice only
 2 tbsp butter (optional)
 sea salt, to taste
 fresh ground black pepper, to taste
 1 handful fresh basil, torn

METHOD

Bring large pot of salted water to boil. In fry pan on medium-high heat, add olive oil and onions; saute 2 minutes. Lower heat slightly and add garlic and chili flakes. Saute on medium heat 2-3 minutes. Add white wine and deglaze pan. Cook 3 minutes. Remove from heat, keep warm until ready to add freshly cooked pasta. In pot of boiling water, add pappardelle. Cook according to instructions then drain. Place fry pan back on medium heat. Add drained pasta; vegetable stock; capers, if desired; tomatoes; baby kale; and lemon juice. Add butter, if desired, toss well. Cook 2-3 minutes, tossing occasionally, and season with salt and pepper, to taste, and basil. Toss again, remove from heat and serve.

Rouxbe.com

SUMMER GARDEN PASTA SALAD

1 # thin spaghetti, broken into 1" pieces
 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
 2 zucchini, peeled & diced
 2 cucumbers, diced
 1 green pepper, diced
 1 red pepper, diced
 1 (16 oz.) can sliced black olives, drained

Dressing:

1 (16 oz.) bottle Italian dressing
 1/4 c parmesan cheese
 1 T sesame seeds
 1 tsp paprika
 1/2 tsp celery seed
 1/2 tsp garlic salt

METHOD

Cook pasta and drain. Drizzle with small amount of olive oil to prevent sticking and stir to combine. Combine pasta with veggies and black olives. Whisk dressing ingredients together. Pour over salad ingredients and toss until coated. Cover and refrigerate 3 hours or overnight.
Jane Ham, Rapid City

PIZZA NOODLE HOT DISH

Ingredients:

1 lb. ground beef, browned and drained
 1/2 c. chopped onion
 1 jar pizza sauce
 Salt and pepper to taste
 3 c. noodles, cooked and drained
 1 jar spaghetti sauce
 1 pkg. pepperoni slices
 Mozzarella cheese for top

METHOD

Mix ingredients together and put in a greased 9 x 13 pan. Bake at 350* for 20 minutes. Sprinkle 8 oz. of mozzarella cheese on top and place back in oven to melt.

JOAN ANTONEN, ARLINGTON

SPAGHETTI PIZZA

Ingredients:

1/2 lb spaghetti
 4 eggs
 1 c. milk
 Salt & pepper
 7 oz. pepperoni
 1/2 lb hamburger
 1/2 lb pork sausage
 1 onion
 1 lg jar spaghetti sauce
 2 c. mozzarella cheese

METHOD

Cook spaghetti, drain, and put in the bottom of a 9x13 casserole dish. Mix eggs, milk, salt, and pepper to taste and pour over noodles. Spread pepperoni over the above. Brown hamburger, sausage, and onion and put over pepperoni. Pour spaghetti sauce over all. Sprinkle mozzarella on top. Bake at 350° for 45 min.

Ruth Morman, Volin

Please send your favorite dairy 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 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Additional Minnesota Households Qualify for Energy Assistance



Toni Kruger
Member Services
Supervisor

We know that COVID-19 has created additional financial hardships, placing an even larger burden on families already struggling to pay their bills or bring their accounts current. If you are experiencing difficulty paying your electric bill, the Energy Assistance Program (EAP) helps pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs for income-qualified homeowners and renters.

An estimated 100,000 additional Minnesota households are newly eligible for Energy Assistance.

The Minnesota Department of Commerce has expanded EAP by raising income eligibility and extending the deadline to apply to Sept. 1, 2021. Households with incomes at or below 60 percent of the state’s median income may be eligible, which is about \$65,000 in annual income for a household of four.

Household Size.....	Annual Income Limit
1.....	\$33,918
2.....	\$44,355
3.....	\$54,791
4.....	\$65,228
5.....	\$75,664
6.....	\$86,101

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE EAP PROGRAM OR TO APPLY FOR ASSISTANCE:

- Visit the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Assistance website, <https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/energy-assistance/>, for more details and to access the application portal.
- Contact your county EAP service provider for additional information and assistance.

Sioux Valley Energy exists because of you, and we are dedicated to the people and communities we serve. If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill and do not qualify for either of these programs, please contact our Member Services Department at 877-511-8062 for further assistance.

SOUTH DAKOTANS MAY ALSO HAVE OPTIONS FOR ASSISTANCE

Federal funding may be available to assist South Dakota residents with emergency housing assistance. If you have been financially impacted due to COVID-19, the SD CARES Housing Assistance Program (SDCHAP) may provide temporary mortgage, rent and/or utility assistance.

Assistance provided is not a loan and does not have to be paid back. Payment is made directly to the mortgage servicer, landlord or utility provider on the applicant’s behalf. Funding amount is based on need.

Funds can be used to cover rent, rental arrears, utilities, utility arrears, mortgage payments and mortgage delinquency, from March 13, 2020 to present.

HOW TO APPLY:

Log on to sdcareshousingassistance.com to verify eligibility requirements and begin the application process.

Source: www.sdhda.org/images/docu/Social%20Programs/Emergency-Housing-Assistance.pdf

Contact SVE
Member Services
at 877-511-8062.

ELECTRIC EQUIPMENT NEEDS TO BE ACCESSIBLE

Sioux Valley Energy occasionally needs to conduct maintenance on and/or gain access to the inside of its equipment. In order to maintain access and ensure safety of employees/members, please follow these guidelines:

GUIDELINES FOR MAINTAINING ACCESS TO SIOUX VALLEY ENERGY EQUIPMENT

- Don't enclose equipment or recess it in the walls of building or homes
- Don't enclose meter sockets or pedestals with siding
- Don't install concrete around pad-mounted transformers, meter pedestals, PVC pipe coming out of the ground or other above ground equipment in a residential area
- Don't plant bushes or shrubs in front of pad-mounted transformers, meter pedestals, meter sockets or other above ground equipment
- Don't build a deck, patio or tree house over a meter socket

If you are doing work around the meter socket and have questions about what will/won't hinder Sioux Valley Energy's access, please call the Engineering Department at 1-800-234-1960.



Decks built around meters, concrete poured around meter poles, and excessive vegetation encasing meters can hinder access to Co-op equipment. To ensure access and safety call SVE before doing work around your meter socket.

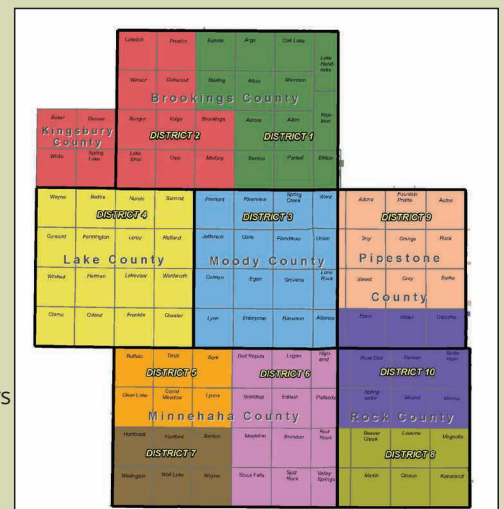
DISTRICT 2 MEMBERS TO MEET SEPT. 21 IN VOLGA

Members of Sioux Valley Energy District 2 will gather Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021, at the Sioux Valley School in Volga to elect a director from the district.

There is currently a vacancy on the Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors for District 2 (western Brookings County and part of Kingsbury County) resulting from the death of Allan Kooima. According to the Cooperative's bylaws, the unexpired remainder of any vacant Director's term on the Board shall be filled by the vote of the members of the district in which the vacancy exists at the next regular district

meeting. District meetings are regularly scheduled in March and April. Because of the length of time between now and the 2022 District 2 regularly scheduled meeting, the SVE Board of Directors has decided to hold an election meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021, at the Sioux Valley School in Volga. Details of that meeting will be sent to each member closer to the event.

A letter was mailed to District 2 members with specific information about director qualifications, the July 23 petition deadline and other information.



In hot pursuit of Walleye



Aydan Johnson landed this Walleye on his 12th birthday at Cow Creek north of Pierre. Photos by Billy Gibson

SD anglers pursue walleye for fun and charity

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Walleye fishing isn't always all about fishing for walleye.

That was the case at the annual SDREC Employee and Vendor Walleye Fishing Tournament held earlier this summer at the Cow Creek Recreation Area north of Pierre. For most of the more than 100 walleye whisperers who participated, the event was mostly about hanging out together, swapping fish tales - some of them true - and catching up with one another.

The tournament also raised \$500 for the state's rural electric cooperative Line Patrol charity.

For Evan Buckmiller, general manager at Kingsbury Electric Cooperative in DeSmet, the tournament presented a prime opportunity to spend time with family and interact with his cooperative colleagues. While his team failed to place, he enjoyed being out on the water with his wife and dad.

"It was a little hot, but we had beautiful weather and caught a lot of fish...just not as many as we wanted," said Buckmiller. "I'd never been a part of this event, so it was fun seeing all the boats taking off at the same time. It was also good to see people you don't normally get to see, or you haven't seen since you worked a storm together years ago. You get to connect with your friends and linemen you went to school with. That's the fun part about events like this."

Roger Crom, former manager of loss control services at the South Dakota Rural Electric Association in Pierre, served as a volunteer to help coordinate the event. Crom said while he likes to fish, he takes satisfaction with staying on dry land and meeting the competitors as they come in to weigh their catch and tell of their exploits on the lake.



The dawning of a new summer day brings the promise of fun and a full string of walleye by the afternoon.

“I just enjoy being a part of it every year,” Crom said. “It’s a lot of fun getting together with old friends and meeting new friends and getting to know the young linemen that are now part of the program. It’s not just one or two co-ops, it’s like a big family that comes out year after year. There’s a lot of camaraderie. Everybody works together and we also have a lot of fun together.”

For the record, the winning team of Roger Squires, Ryan Squires and Ron Koosman took top honors, despite temperatures soaring into the 90s and water levels that were unusually low. The crew representing H-D Electric and Dueco prevailed over a field of more than 30 teams with a total weight of 18.03 lbs. Their largest walleye weighed in at 3.05 lbs.

The East River Electric team of Tim Dockendorf, Doug Engbrecht



Crew members of the Captain Crawdaddy prepare to launch at Cow Creek.

and Robert Hanson landed the largest walleye at 4.04 lbs. (Search YouTube for Cooperative Connections Plus to see a video of the event.)

It’s no secret that the Missouri River system boasts some of the best walleye fishing in North America and is one of the top walleye habitats on the continent.

While there are many other walleye fishing tournaments held throughout the state in the spring and fall, one that stands out is the Tom and Matt Hill Memorial Tournament.

The fifth annual event, set for July 31 at the West Whitlock Recreation Area near Gettysburg, is held each year in honor of the Hill brothers who died in a boating accident on Brush Lake in December of 2016.

Born and reared in Volga, the siblings were avid hunters and fishermen. They were finishing up a day of duck hunting and were heading back to the landing to meet their father when their boat suddenly capsized.

The tournament is held to raise funds to support local youth outdoor programs in honor of the brothers. Proceeds have gone toward purchasing safety hunting vests for youngsters, hunting gear and safety training.

Sheila Gross, Energy Services Specialist at Sioux Valley Energy in

It’s no secret that the Missouri River system boasts some of the best walleye fishing in North America.

Colman, lost her brother and great-nephew in a fishing accident in January. As word spread, friends and family of the Hill Memorial Tournament and Fishing 4 Miracles jumped into action with an outpouring of support to the Berwald family. To express their gratitude, several of Gross’ family members plan to participate in the tournament to help contribute to the safe enjoyment of fishing and hunting.

“The Hill Brothers Committee is an amazing group of people and they do so much to support the community and those who have been impacted by tragedy. They have blessed my family in our time of loss and have brought great comfort,” she said.

A rules meeting will take place on Friday, July 30, at the Whitlock Bay Supper Club. An open house will be held from 1-5 p.m. with a meal from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Smart Home Technologies, Benefits



Sheila Gross
Energy Services
Specialist

All kinds of devices and appliances are getting smarter. You probably already know about TVs and thermostats (and, of course, phones). But everything from lightbulbs to washers and dryers to refrigerators to security systems are available with internet capabilities that allow for easier and more automated control.

With smart home technologies, you can use voice command or an app on a phone, computer or tablet for remote control, giving you more freedom to customize parts of your home. In turn, you'll receive alerts and information about an action being finished (e.g., the dishwasher cycle being complete) or a potential issue (e.g., a water leak).

HERE ARE SEVERAL SMART HOME TECHNOLOGIES TO BE AWARE OF:

- Smart speakers like the Amazon Echo and Google Home allow you to perform many tasks through voice command and can connect to other smart home devices to give you additional control.
- Smart lighting comes in a few forms. Basic smart lightbulbs, color-changing bulbs and smart light switches give you flexibility in your lighting options (switches may require an electrician for installation). For added security, many smart lights can be set up on a vacation mode to make it seem like someone's at home when you're out of town.
- Smart plugs connect to a traditional outlet and can then be used to power a device. You can use a dedicated app to manage what's plugged in, set up a schedule or timer, or see how much energy is being used.
- Smart thermostats like ones from Nest and Ecobee make it easier to adjust your home's temperature for different times of day, schedules or occupancy levels.
- Smart appliances, such as refrigerators, microwaves and ovens, often come with added functionality that allow for operation through an app or voice command.

- Smart security systems can be found with a variety of setups to meet your needs, allowing you to monitor and control your home's security from virtually anywhere.

HERE ARE THE BENEFITS YOU'LL EXPERIENCE FROM INTEGRATING SMART DEVICES INTO YOUR HOME:

- Convenience and comfort are the primary advantage you'll gain with smart home technology. You get a remote and sometimes hands-free way to control devices and customize a variety of actions, from scheduling to automating to occupancy sensing.
- Related to convenience is accessibility, which is a particularly big perk for an aging population. Being able to shut off lights or change the temperature via voice command can be especially helpful for those with mobility, dexterity, memory or vision issues. Some smart speakers also allow family members to check in with each other to keep in touch.
- Smart home technologies can produce energy and cost savings thanks to their added control and automation. For example, you can avoid wasting electricity by setting up your thermostats and lights to operate only when you need them. Some thermostats can even monitor the health of your heating and cooling system and alert you before a system failure.
- Advanced security comes from being able to monitor your home remotely via cameras and motion sensors.
- Talk with your electric cooperative about any programs or incentives that may be available to help you integrate smart home technologies into your house.

This article was provided by Advanced Energy, a nonprofit energy consulting firm and Touchstone Energy Cooperative, Inc. For more information, visit www.advancedenergy.org or www.touchstoneenergy.com

Contact Sheila Gross at sheila.gross@siouxvalleyenergy.com to learn about SVE's \$50 smart thermostat rebate and the Time of Use Rate.



BE A SMARTIE

Register to win a NEST learning thermostat for your home! You can register online at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com or by filling out the form below. Register by Aug. 6 for your chance to win!

PLEASE REGISTER ME TO WIN! I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO BE CONTACTED ABOUT THE TOPICS BELOW.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ ZIP: _____
 Account #: _____
 Phone #: _____
 Email: _____

Mail this form to:
 Sioux Valley Energy,
 PO Box 216,
 Colman, SD 57017

I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON:

- Heat Pump Rebate
- Electric Heat Rate
- Energy Audit
- Loan Program
- Electric Vehicle Program
- Time of Use Rate
- Third-Party Irrigation Rebate
- SmartHub Account Tool
- Smart Thermostat Rebate
- Commercial/Ag LED Program
- Commercial Heat Rebates
- Renewable Energy Credit
- Energy Saving Tips
- Interlock Kit/Generator
- Marathon/Westinghouse Water Heaters

Take control of your energy bill and save with a

\$SHIFT

in your home's energy use with our Time of Use Rate.

By simply shifting some of the times you normally do daily tasks and chores to off-peak times, you pay a much lower kilowatt-hour charge. The Time of Use Rate (TOU) is also a great way to take advantage of smart home automation and electric vehicle technology.

KWH RATE COMPARISONS				
PROGRAM	7 a.m. to 10 a.m.	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.	4 p.m. to 9 p.m.	9 p.m. to 7 a.m.
Time of Use Rate	16.15¢	5.84¢	16.15¢	5.84¢
Regular	10.26¢	10.26¢	10.26¢	10.26¢
Electric Heat Sub-meter	6.35¢	6.35¢	6.35¢	6.35¢

Members receiving the reduced electric heat rate remain on that program so heating costs will not fluctuate. The TOU rate is available for residential and general service accounts including former Alliant Energy customers and co-generation accounts.

**Ready to start Saving?
 Contact us today at 877-511-8062**

Winning Combo

Sioux Valley Energy's most recent Energy Makeover Contest had more than 400 members sign up to win one of two electric lawn care combos. Jerry and Wendy Evink of Edgerton, Minnesota, and Tim and Jessica Groeneveld, Brandon, South Dakota, were the contest winners.




Above: SVE Energy Services Specialist Sheila Gross presents Tim Groeneveld with his prizes.
Left: Gross presents Wendy Evink with her prizes.

RV TRIPPING

RV campers make new friends and enjoy new experiences on the open road. *Photo by South Dakota Travel*

Vic and Barb Simmons adopt the RV lifestyle when visiting new places and creating lasting memories on the road

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Decisions, decisions...

When Vic Simmons starts to sense the allure of the open road, he has some decisions to make. He can crank up his Jeep Cherokee and join all the brand loyalists out there who rally around the phrase, "It's a Jeep thing: You wouldn't understand."

Or he could go grab his gloves and his riding gear, fire up his orange 2017 Harley-Davidson Street Glide and experience the wind rush and beauty of the natural landscape on two wheels. Or he can climb into the command-and-control center of his massive 40-foot Meridian "diesel pusher" motor coach.

But who wants to be burdened by making tough decisions when the highway is calling? Most of the time he makes it a little easier by attaching the bike or the Jeep and

heading out into the great wide open.

Simmons, who just turned 65, serves as general manager of Rushmore Electric in Rapid City. But he has plans of retiring early next year and that means lots of travel time in the future with his wife Barb and whoever else wants to join the adventure.

The passenger list usually includes a host of grandchildren as it has from the beginning of Simmons' foray into the world of recreational vehicles and RV life.

He and Barb invested in their first RV about 12 years ago by purchasing a pre-owned 32-foot Class C model Jamboree, the kind that's built on a truck chassis and resembles a van with a large camper shell and a sleeping chamber over the roof.

"When our three girls were little, Barb's parents used to take them

camping, and to this day they always talk about how much they enjoyed those trips," Simmons said. "So, when it came time for us to have grandkids, we wanted to have a way to create those same kinds of memories for our own grandchildren."

Inevitably, as the family grew the smaller that 32-foot camper became. Besides, the vehicle was a bit top-heavy and caused some white-knuckle driving in high winds, and according to Vic, "Barb's idea of roughing it is staying at a hotel without a swimming pool." So, after three summers an upgrade with more space and more amenities was in order, and Simmons graduated to a 37-foot motor coach.

After a few years, he sold that RV to Lacreek General Manager Josh Fanning, who used it for family vacations and to take his daughter to weightlifting and track competitions in far-flung places.

Soon afterwards, Vic and Barb acquired their "forever RV," a 40-foot Meridian they purchased



Vic Simmons of Rushmore Electric enjoys climbing behind the wheel and piloting his 40-foot recreational vehicle.

a few years ago when Vic began planning out his retirement.

Simmons, who prides himself on always buying pre-owned vehicles, purchased the RV sight-unseen... well almost.

"I found it at a dealership in Lincoln," he recalled. "It had 17,000 miles on it and looked like it was in good shape. My son-in-law was in Lincoln, so he went to the dealership and Facetimed me and walked through it and it looked nice. It was set up to pull the Jeep or the trailer for the motorcycle, so we got it. I don't usually do business like that, but..."

With Vic soon retiring and Barb already retired from her



Vic and Barb Simmons use their RV to visit new places and create lasting memories.

job as the pharmacy technician program director at Western Dakota Technical Institute, the two have lots of traveling plans in their future.

One hitch, however, is finding places to park. RV sales shot through the roof nationally last year as people sought to escape the confines of their homes under lock down conditions and explore the outdoors.

"You can hardly find any good camping spots," Simmons said. "Camping just became something that people felt safe doing, and it got them out of their homes. A neighbor of mine had a travel trailer for sale and it sold in just a few minutes after he posted it."

Simmons said his travel adventures have taken him from North Carolina on the eastern seaboard to Washington state on the Pacific, and also all the way down to El Paso.

His plan is to "go to places I haven't been," although when asked if there's one place he would like to re-visit he's quick with an answer.

"Door County in eastern Wisconsin. I just fell in love with the place," he said. "It's on the peninsula above Green Bay and is just gorgeous

'GREAT 8' UNIQUE RV CAMPGROUNDS IN SD

Here are the state's top eight unique campgrounds, according to the state Department of Tourism:

Wessington Springs City Park Campground

Wessington Springs

Castlewood City Park Municipal Campground

Castlewood

Lake Carthage Campground

Carthage

Custer's Gulch RV Park

Custer

Cedar Pass Campground

Badlands National Park

Rafter J Bar Ranch

Hill City

Fish 'N Fry Campground & RV Park

Deadwood

Rocky Point Recreation Area

Belle Fourche

with a beautiful campground and a friendly community and shops and restaurants on Sturgeon Bay. The sunrises and sunsets are awesome."

His plans for himself and Barb are the same he had for his grandchildren when he invested in his first RV: meet new people, explore new places and make lasting memories.

Oddly enough, many of those new people are encountered not at state parks, camp sites or in restaurants, but at the fuel pump.

"When you're driving a car and stop for gas, nobody will come up and talk to you," he said. "But if you're on a motorcycle or in an RV, it's amazing how many people want to come up and talk to you all the time about where you're going and where you've been. They also like to talk a lot about gas mileage."



POOLING PENNIES

Local Organizations Use Operation Round Up® monies in efforts

Brenda Kleinjan
Communications Specialist

From lifesaving devices to historic preservation and numerous other things in between, dozens of area organizations have benefited from Operation Round Up® funds this year.

In the first half of 2021, more than \$79,000 has been distributed to 40 area organizations, including the Moody County Ambulance service, Prairie Village and others.

MAINTAINING VITAL AIR SUPPLY

The Moody County Ambulance service in Flandreau, S.D., received a \$1,500 grant to help with the purchase of a McGrath Video Laryngoscope. After several months of waiting, the device arrived in July.

The device is used when intubating patients. The addition of video capabilities allows EMTs to accurately see the vocal cords when placing an intubation tube in someone's trachea.

"Video provides a more accurate way of doing this along with a better view," said A.J. Gengler, Moody

County Ambulance's director.

Using the device reduces the chances of creating a soft palate or breaking teeth during intubation.

Moody County EMS was recently approved to perform rapid sequence intubation in the field and the McGrath Video Laryngoscope will help with this.

WINDOW TO THE PAST

Restoration efforts on railway cars at Historic Prairie Village in Madison, S.D., were funded in part by a \$1,500 grant from Sioux Valley Energy's Operation Round Up program.

"Some of the railroad car work involves window structural and safety latch repair, replacing deteriorated wood, and painting," said Historic Prairie Village Manager Faron Wahl.

"In the case of these photos, we removed an old door and filled



A door on a passenger rail car at Historic Prairie Village was converted to a window with a \$1,500 Operation Round Up grant. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** One of the passenger rail road cars at Prairie Village in Madison. *Photos courtesy Prairie Village*

in the gap with some lumber and added a storm window,” Wahl said.

The passenger car is one of the primary cars that visitors to Historic Prairie Village ride in when they purchase a ticket for the train rides held at 2 p.m. on Saturdays during their summer season. The trains also operate on Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Railroad Day and the Jamboree in addition to other events as announced.

Want to learn more about Historic Prairie Village? Go to <https://www.prairievillage.org/railroad/>

START POOLING YOUR PENNIES

Sioux Valley Energy members contribute to ORU by having their electric bill rounded up to the next highest dollar and that money is collected for Operation Round Up. Many Sioux Valley Energy employees also help by

deducting a small amount from their paychecks. Learn more about Sioux Valley Energy’s Operation Round Up program at <https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-community/operation-roundup>.

The next application deadline for Operation Round Up is Aug 20.



A. J. Gengler, Moody County Ambulance director, displays the new McGrath Video Laryngoscope, which he demonstrates at left. A \$1,500 ORU grant covered half the cost of the medical device.

REGISTER TO WIN!

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

Your Phone Number: _____

Your E-mail Address: _____

August 26-29
58th Annual Steam
Threshing Jamboree
Photo by Travel South Dakota



JULY 23-25
Arlington Days
Various Locations, Arlington,
SD, 605-983-5251

JULY 27-31
Days of '76 Rodeo & Parades
Various Locations, Deadwood,
SD, 605-578-1876

JULY 29-AUGUST 1
Bruce Honey Days
City-wide, Bruce, SD,
605-627-5671

AUGUST 1
27th Annual Car Show
Prairie Village, Madison, SD,
605-256-3644

JULY 31
ATV Mud Bog
Arlington, SD, 605-690-5717

AUGUST 5,
SEPTEMBER 2, 30
Downtown Hartford Market
Main Avenue, Hartford, SD,
605-999-6660

AUGUST 5-14
Sioux Empire Fair
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds,
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7178

AUGUST 6-7
Huron Senior Games
Various Locations, Huron, SD,
605-491-0635 or 605-353-8533

AUGUST 6-7
Potato Days
Citywide, Clark, SD,
605-360-7672

AUGUST 6-8
Annual Sioux River Folk Festival
Newton Hills State Park,
Canton, SD, 605-261-7414

AUGUST 6-15
Sturgis Motorcycle Rally
Citywide, Sturgis, SD,
605-720-0800

AUGUST 12-15
Annual Custer County Fair
Custer County Fairgrounds,
Hermosa, SD, 605-255-4145
or 605-393-7055

AUGUST 13-15
Fort Pierre Trader Days & Backyard BBQ Competition
Various Locations, Fort Pierre,
SD, 605-223-7603

AUGUST 15
Annual Arlington Car Show
Arlington, SD, 605-203-0728

AUGUST 17-19
Dakotafest
2300 E Spruce Street,
Mitchell, SD, 877-611-8161

AUGUST 21
Dakota State Fair Speedway Stock Car Races
South Dakota State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD,
605-352-4848

AUGUST 25-29
Corn Palace Festival
604 N Main Street,
Mitchell, SD, 605-995-8430

AUGUST 26-29
58th Annual Steam Threshing Jamboree
Prairie Village, Madison, SD,
605-256-3644

AUGUST 28
McCrossan Boys Ranch Xtreme Event Rodeo
McCrossan Boys Ranch Campus,
Sioux Falls SD, 605-339-1203

SEPTEMBER 11
Bean Bag Tournament Benefit Event for the Brandon Valley Hockey Association
Bottoms Up, Corson, SD, email
Sarah.rasmussen@yahoo.com
for details

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

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.