

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



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for Success**

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# A Balanced Team



**Ken Schlinggen**  
General Manager

As we approach the end of February and roll into March, most of us are looking forward to high school basketball playoffs and state tournaments. Best of luck to your local team. It is very likely that the teams that make it deep into the tournament have players with different roles and abilities. Some are better at shooting three-pointers, some are better at defense. Having a balanced mix of skills makes a team difficult to

defeat. The way to keep electricity reliable and affordable is a bit like that, too.

The electric team first requires consistent players that can jump in the game any time they are needed. Having enough “always available” fuel sources like natural gas and coal can ensure consistent power generation.

Just like a team needs different players for different situations, our power grid requires multiple sources to keep the grid running. Relying solely on one player to win every game is not an effective strategy. If they are injured or unable to play, you'll likely lose. Similarly, using a single fuel source for electricity generation poses a significant risk. Any unforeseen disruption can impact the energy supply chain. A diverse mix of energy sources acts as a safeguard, ensuring that the grid remains operational and affordable, even in the face of unexpected challenges or price changes.

Keeping our electric energy supply more affordable means accommodating the intermittent nature of renewable energy sources like solar and wind. Think of solar power like a team's inconsistent three-point shooter. It's awesome when the sun is shining bright, but not great at nighttime or a cloudy day. That's where the other players, like hydro, nuclear, natural gas and coal keep the team scoring.

Every good team also has players they call upon to come off the bench and make a meaningful contribution. That bench is you, our members. In March, your cooperative will take possession of the next generation of load management receivers. This receiver is installed in your home and allows the cooperative to control or turn off your water heater during times when the electric

system is heavily loaded. This voluntary action on your part helps to keep electricity costs lower for everyone on the team.

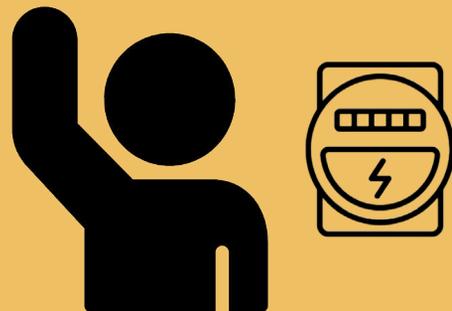
We are looking for approximately 200 members to volunteer for our pilot project for the new devices. Many of you have an existing receiver that can simply be replaced. Some members may volunteer to participate in this program for the first time. Everyone is needed to help our team. If you are willing to get in the game and volunteer to be part of this pilot project, call the office at 605-996-7516. We would greatly appreciate your assistance to ensure a successful launch.

A diverse set of energy sources is essential, but that's not the only thing we need to have reliable and affordable electricity—or a winning team. The key to keeping our electricity reliable and affordable is by using a diverse “team” of fuels and utilizing every player in a role they are best suited for. Each player brings something special to the table, and together, they make sure we have affordable electric power whenever we need it.

Until next month, stay safe!



## Volunteers Needed for Pilot Project!



To participate in the load management pilot project please call 605-996-7516.

**CENTRAL ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVE  
CONNECTIONS**

(USPS 018-963)

**Board of Directors**

Aurora County - Duane Wolbrink, President  
 Brule County - Bradee Pazour  
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 Hanson County - Mark Hofer - Secretary & NRECA Director  
 Jerauld County - Mark Reindl, Treasurer  
 Miner County - Robert Banks - Director  
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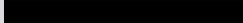
CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301. Families subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Central Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to cooperative members on matters pertaining to their cooperative and living better with electricity. Also available at [www.centralecc.coop](http://www.centralecc.coop).

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**Contact Us**

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
 Phone: 1-800-477-2892 or 1-605-996-7516



**Our Mission**

Provide reliable energy and services with a commitment to safety and member satisfaction.

**Non-Discrimination Statement:**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. Central Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

**Board Meeting Summary**

The board of directors met on Dec. 18, 2023, at Central Electric Cooperative's headquarters for the regular board meeting. They reviewed reports by management including details on operations, member services, communications, service department and financials.

**BOARD REPORT**

General Manager Schlimgen updated the board of directors on the East River Electric Managers' Advisory Committee, Basin Electric activities, Rural Electric Economic Development fund and other management activities.

Area legislators joined the board of directors and staff for the annual Legislative Luncheon. East River Electric and S.D. Rural Electric Association gave an overview of legislative initiatives for 2024.

Directors Bechen, Reindl, Loudner and Wolbrink reported on the Mid-West Electric Consumers Association meeting.

Director Hofer gave an update from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association meeting.

Director Wolbrink reported on East River Electric activities.

The board reviewed monthly director expenses.

**BOARD ACTION**

The board considered or acted upon the following:

- A motion was made and seconded to adopt revisions to Policy 880 – Service Fees. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to adopt revisions to Policy 301 – Line and Service Extensions. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to decline a service territory exception request. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to adopt a resolution authorizing Central Electric Cooperative to apply for a \$2 million USDA Rural Economic Development Loan on behalf of the Mitchell Area Development Corporation. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to participate with STAR Energy and make application for grid resiliency grant funds. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve 2023 electric account bad debt write-offs for \$3,796.10. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve 2023 miscellaneous bad debt write-offs for \$2,480.44. Motion carried.

There being no further business, President Wolbrink adjourned the meeting. The next board meeting was scheduled for Jan. 22.

<b>FINANCIAL REPORT</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE DEC. 2022</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE DEC. 2023</b>
Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Sales	348,300,995 kWh	344,166,832 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$ 33,383,874	\$ 35,185,450
Total Cost of Service	\$ 32,732,914	\$ 34,584,068
Operating Margins	\$ 650,960	\$ 601,382

## 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 tsps. 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](http://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](http://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.

# Unclaimed capital credits

## Can you help locate these former members?

The following list of former members had unclaimed capital credits from Central Electric Cooperative as of February 8, 2024. If you have a phone number or address for anybody on this list, please contact our office by phone at 1-800-477-2892 or 1-605-996-7516 during business hours.

### A

Adams, Chantelle  
Anderson, David E  
Asfeld, David

### B

Bad Moccasin, Dawn or Glyndon  
Bad Moccasin, Glyndon  
Bailey, George Jr  
Baumgart, Melvin  
Bearface, Kimberly  
Beatch, Bertha  
Beauregard, Arlyne  
Begeman, John  
Bennett, Michael H  
Berens, Brad & Lisa  
Big Eagle, Marilyn  
Boom, James  
Bricker, Jerry or Joyce  
Bult, Leroy or Sperlich, Irene  
Buttemeier, Nadine

### C

Chapman, Bethany  
Chapman, Mallory  
Colombe, Collin  
Colombe, Tally  
Comes Flying, George or Wanda  
Comes Flying, Wanda  
Cornelison, Dan  
Cr Cr Rodeo Club  
& Elderly- Harold Miller  
Culhane Motels  
Curry, La Donna

### D

Davenport, Rick  
Davidson, David  
Deal, Terry  
Dean, Rose M  
Decker, Ricky or Raquel  
Decker, Tyler  
Dion, Marvel  
Dise, Josef or Boschee, Kolya  
Doerr, Julie  
Doop, Marlin or Susan  
Drapeau, James  
Drapeau, Verlyn  
Durant, Paul

### E

Ebersdorfer, Jan  
Eggert, Brad  
Ehlike, Marcella  
Enfield, Jacob  
Engelken, Loras  
Erpenbach, Marie

### F

Fischer, Curt  
Fleury, Richard  
Forbes, Kylie  
Fouberg, Kathryn  
Friebel, Greg

### G

Gatto, Robert  
Garrett, Sommer  
Getty, Carlton or Alice  
Gonzales, Margaret or Rochelle  
Gravatt-Felicia, Glenda  
Grey Owl, Tina F  
Gunderson, Percy

### H

Hall, Karla  
Halverson, Arnold or Esther M  
Hansen, Douglas C  
Hanson, Mary  
Hawk, Alvin  
Heggen, Jon  
Heinsohn Digging & Tiling LTD  
Hill, Roger or Terry  
Hines, Scott  
His Law, Natalie  
Hirschhorn, Larry  
Hoffman, Gene  
Houde, Jacqueline  
Howard, Christian

### I

Isakson, Alfred or Munneke, Alvina  
Isburg, Robert Jr

### J

Jacobsen, Stephanie  
Jensen, Dorothy or Gary  
Johansen, Eric  
Johnson, Janna or Fallis, Marilyn  
Johnson, Robert D  
Johnson, Robert M  
Johnson, Robin  
Jones, Bobby  
Jones, Everett Sr or Jones, Clement  
Jorgenson, Steve or Laura

### K

Keleher, Patrick  
Kelly, Bruce E or Bobbie  
Keown, Joseph R

Kesterson, Ashley  
Kinnear, Lynn  
Kittelton, Wallace

### L

Lapp, Richard  
La Roche, Daecia  
Larrington, Michael  
Laverdure, Derek  
Leonard, Johanna or Dobbersteins, RK  
Lennick, Cassandra  
Lopez, Tino

### M

Malcom McKillop Trust  
Marks, Randy  
Marquez, Florence  
McGhee, Kelly  
McGhee, Susan  
Mentele, Ursula  
Midwest Mobile Communications or  
Friestad, L  
Miller, Nancy  
Miner, Rob  
Mitchell Two Way Radio  
Meyer, Michael G  
Mlady, Randolph C  
Moody, Terry  
Moody, Wade  
Moriarity, Mike  
M-T Corner or Youngberg, Jordan  
Mulloy, Shane

### N

Neises, Bradley F  
Nelson Farms or Botts, William  
Neugebauer, Jerald  
Neugebauer, Lincoln  
Nielsen, Eudale  
Northrup, Marvin  
Nutter, Terry

### O

Obago, Russell  
Odegard, Carrie  
Ogren, Ronald or Lynn  
Onihan, Katherine

### P

Penner, Donald  
Phillips, Kira  
Pietz, Thomas J  
Powers, Patricia  
Pruner, Steve

### Q

Quilt, Mitchell J

(Continued on next page)

## R

Randall, Tim  
Reifers, Gregg G  
Renken, Delton  
Resick, Austin  
Ritchie, Deb  
Robertson, Don  
Romero, Paul  
Roshau, Frank A Jr  
Ross, Dan  
Ross, Dennis

## S

Sadler, Douglas  
Sanow, Laurie  
Satterlee, James or Dan  
Sazue, Eric  
Sazue, Mattea  
Schaub, Constance  
Schmidt, Jerome  
Schreurs, Jay  
Schwader, Eunice  
SD Fireworks or Rich Brothers  
Seaboy, Trinie Jr  
Sell, Frank Jr  
Shields, Pauline  
Shields, William or Pauline  
Shottenkirk Cattle Co  
Siedschlaw, Robert  
Sloan, William R

## Starr, Earl

St John, Edmund  
St John, Madonna  
St John, Melvina or Madonna  
Shoots the Enemy, Corbin  
Sperlich, Irene  
Spider, Darla  
Sullivan, Raymond  
Summers, Rayne  
Surrounded, Audrey  
Swenson, Clinton  
Swenson, Don

## T

Tankovich, James  
Taylor, Renita  
Termeer, Lynna  
Teveldal, Kevin  
Thigh, Hattie  
Thomas, Wayne  
Thompson, Amy  
Thompson, John  
Thompson, Jolene  
Tines, David  
Timmerman, Dennis  
Truman, Gloria F

## U

Uecker, Jeremy  
Ulmer, Tim

## V

Vanderpol, Douglas  
Vanheerden, Christo or Shannon  
Vetos, Lloyd  
Versteeg, Verlyn  
Veo, Kally

## W

Wade, Kristal D  
Wagaman, Mike  
Waldner, Clint  
Walker, Verlyn  
Watson, Carl  
Watson, Jeff  
Weable, Daryl D  
Weinberg, Marilyn  
Wells, Brent  
Wells, Kim  
Wenande, John D  
Wheeler, Kim  
White Bead, Maudella  
Williams, Trevor  
Witt, Danielle  
Wounded Knee, Werdna or Glenda

## Y

Yellow Wolf, Tom  
Yost, William

## Z

Zimmerman, Douglas or Linda

# Member Rebates & Incentives

## Electric Heating Equipment Rebate

Members may be eligible to receive a \$600 cash payment for installation of an energy star electric heat pump system. The structure must receive electric service from the cooperative and each structure is limited to one rebate.

## Third-Party Irrigation or Grain Bin Dryer Management Systems

Members may be eligible for a \$750 rebate for a third-party remotely managed irrigation or grain drying system. The equipment must meet specified requirements as defined by the cooperative.

## Member Loan Program

Low-interest loans are available for qualifying members who are installing new electric heating equipment or completing a weatherization project. The maximum loan amount is \$20,000 or 80 percent of the installation cost.

## Water Heater Rebates

Members may be eligible to receive a rebate of \$9 per gallon of capacity, provided the water heating unit meets specified requirements as defined by the cooperative.

Certain conditions must be met to qualify for rebates and incentive programs. Please contact Patrick Soukup, Manager of Member Services and Marketing, at 1-800-477-2892 for details regarding cooperative rebates and incentives.





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.

# Housing & Home Improvement Programs Available

Home improvement, rehabilitation and weatherization programs are in place to assist individuals and families with the high cost of eligible projects. Below is a summary of local organizations that may be able to help with housing and home improvements at a reduced cost or no cost if you meet certain qualifications.

## Local Resources

The Crow Creek Housing Authority works within the community to meet the housing needs of local residents. Available programs include low rent housing, home ownership programs, tenant base assistance and public housing. Home rehabilitation services are available on a limited basis depending on funding. Learn more online at [crowcreekhousing.org](http://crowcreekhousing.org) or by calling 605-245-2250. Dacotah Tipis Habitat for Humanity in Fort Thompson may also be able to assist with home repairs and improvements. They can be reached by email at [hfttipis@midstatesd.net](mailto:hfttipis@midstatesd.net) or by calling 605-245-2450.

Rural Office of Community Services (ROCS) serves Aurora, Brule, Buffalo, Davison, Hanson, Jerauld and Sanborn Counties in Central Electric's service territory. This organization assists income-eligible households with home efficiency improvements, health and safety improvements and emergency furnace repair or replacement. They can also refer homeowners to other available resources. ROCS can be reached online at [rocsinc.org](http://rocsinc.org) or by calling 605-487-7635.

### Exterior Projects May Include:

- Roof repair or replacement
- Siding repair or replacement
- Window and door repair or replacement
- Porch and step repair or replacement
- Gutter repair or replacement
- Foundation repair
- Chimney repair
- Lead-based paint control or abatement

### Interior Projects May Include:

- Wall, ceiling, floor repair or replacement
- Door repair or replacement
- Step repair or replacement
- Kitchen cabinet repair or replacement
- Bathroom fixture repair or replacement
- Heating, ventilation, plumbing or electrical repairs
- Lead-based paint control or abatement



Mitchell Area Housing Inc. (MAHI) serves a 60-mile radius around Mitchell, and the organization is currently offering free funding for home repairs up to \$35,000 per household. Eligible projects may include upgrades to siding, windows, heating and cooling systems, water heaters, electrical upgrades, shingles, accessibility and other improvements. Families and individuals must meet income requirements to qualify. MAHI can be reached online at [movetomitchell.com/mahi](http://movetomitchell.com/mahi) or by calling 605-996-1140.

If you live in Miner County, a new organization called Hearts and Hammers of S.D. is accepting applications for exterior home improvement projects until April 1. Qualifying projects may include gutters, paint or roof repairs. Hearts and Hammers of S.D. is comprised of representatives from local churches. The group combines faith and service, offering labor and materials for exterior rehabilitation and improvement projects. They can be reached at [heartssandhammersofsd@gmail.com](mailto:heartssandhammersofsd@gmail.com) or by calling 605-270-3877.

Also serving Miner County, Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership, Inc. (ICAP) offers the Self-Help Housing Rehabilitation Program to assist homeowners with repairs. Eligible participants work under the direction of a rehabilitation representative to complete home improvements. ICAP administers HOME funds through the S.D. Housing Development Authority. Up to \$25,000 may be used for accessibility modifications, health and safety issues and major system repairs. A furnace program is available for homes that have been weatherized in which eligible clients may qualify to have their heating source repaired or replaced. ICAP can refer homeowners to other funding sources, including USDA Rural Development programs. ICAP can be reached at [interlakescap.com](http://interlakescap.com) or by calling 605-256-6518.

## Where to Start

To find out which programs you may qualify for, visit South Dakota Housing online at [www.sdhousing.org](http://www.sdhousing.org) or call 605-773-3181. South Dakota Housing is a valuable resource for individuals and families seeking assistance with housing programs and home improvement projects.

# Members Play a Critical Role in Upgrading the Load Management System

Central Electric is asking for member volunteers to have new load management devices installed at their homes and businesses. The current devices being used to manage energy usage on water heaters and air conditioners (developed in the 1980s) are outdated and will no longer be supported by the manufacturers. That's why a pilot project is underway.

## What Is Load Management?

Load management is the process of optimizing electricity consumption by reducing energy use during periods of high demand when electricity is more expensive. The goal of load management is to achieve efficiency, reduce costs and maintain reliability in the energy supply.

By optimizing energy consumption, your cooperative can achieve greater efficiency and resilience for years to come. Load management plays a crucial role in ensuring a reliable and sustainable energy supply while minimizing costs and environmental impacts.

## Why Is Load Management Important?

- **Cost Savings:** By shifting energy usage to off-peak times or reducing consumption during peak demand periods, the entire cooperative saves on wholesale power costs.
- **Reliability and Grid Stability:** By reducing strain on the electrical grid during times of high demand, members can help prevent power outages and ensure a more reliable supply of electricity for themselves and their community.
- **Environmental Impact:** By reducing overall energy

consumption and peak demand, you are contributing to a more sustainable energy future and reducing the environmental impact of electricity generation.

- **Community Support:** By working together to manage electricity demand, members can support the cooperative's efforts to provide affordable, reliable and sustainable energy. This benefits the entire cooperative.

## Project Timeline

From March through June, the cooperative needs to install 200 devices to determine if they will work for all of East River Electric's distribution cooperatives.

## What to Expect

If you don't volunteer but are selected to participate, a representative will contact you to schedule the installation. Please understand that our technicians must enter your property to install the device.



This is an example of a load management receiver. It is required for certain rates and rebates on water heaters, air conditioners and irrigation systems.

We appreciate your willingness to allow us into your homes for installation as we move toward greater energy efficiency and cost savings. Your cooperation will help ensure the project is successful.

## Employee Years of Service

 <p><b>Norton</b></p> <p>18 years on March 1</p>	 <p><b>Lindsey</b></p> <p>9 years on March 2</p>	 <p><b>Dustin</b></p> <p>3 years on April 1</p>	 <p><b>Kelly</b></p> <p>2 years on April 19</p>
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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](mailto: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.”

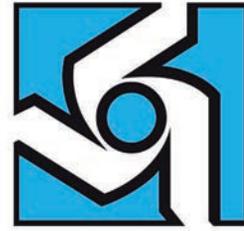
Reflecting on his upbringing, Standing Soldier said that basketball played a significant role in his early life, ultimately leading to college scholarships that allowed him to play basketball for Platte Community College in Nebraska and later the University of Mary in North Dakota. Those opportunities,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

# BUS TOUR



## **BASIN ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

All aboard! We are Bismarck bound to tell our members the story behind the switch.

Central Electric Cooperative's traditional Basin Electric Bus Tour will hit the road again July 17-19, 2024.

Attendees are sure to have fun and make lifelong friends while learning about the cooperative and our electric power supply.

Members who have not attended past tours are given first chance to participate. Previous participants interested in attending will be placed on a standby list and contacted if openings are available.

For more information, call and talk to Manager Member Services and Marketing Patrick Soukup at 1-800-477-2892 or visit our website at [www.centralec.coop/basin-electric-bus-tour](http://www.centralec.coop/basin-electric-bus-tour).

Find registration details on page 15. Let's make it a trip to remember!



**CENTRAL**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

# Register to Attend Central Electric Cooperative's Basin Electric Bus Tour

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July 17-19, 2024

Complete this form to be considered for the 2024 Basin Electric Bus Tour. Participants must be 18 or older to attend. Seating is limited, so sign up early. Members who have not participated in past tours will be given first opportunity to attend. Past participants will be placed on a standby list and contacted if openings are available. The passenger list will be finalized in June. Members will be contacted at that time to confirm attendance and provide the required documentation.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever participated in the Bus Tour?

No     Yes (Year: \_\_\_\_\_ )

Do you require special accommodations?

No     Yes (Details: \_\_\_\_\_ )

Emergency Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form with a check for \$25 per person made out to Central Electric Cooperative to be considered for the Basin Electric Bus Tour.

**Central Electric Cooperative**  
**Basin Electric Bus Tour**  
**PO Box 850**  
**Mitchell, SD 57301**



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

**FEB. 15 - MARCH 15**  
**Chamberlain-Oacoma**  
**Burger Battle**  
 Facebook.com/chamberlainoacoma  
 Chamberlain-Oacoma, SD

**FEB. 19**  
**Wessington Springs Farm,**  
**Home & Health Show**  
 10 a.m.- 3 p.m.  
 W. S. Elementary Gymnasiums  
 Wessington Springs, SD

**FEB. 24**  
**Plankinton Fire &**  
**Ambulance Fundraiser**  
 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
 Plankinton Ag Building  
 Plankinton, SD

**MARCH 3**  
**Sioux Falls American Legion**  
**Pancake Breakfast**  
 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
 South Dakota Military  
 Heritage Alliance Building  
 Sioux Falls, SD

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

**MARCH 9**  
**Epiphany Sausage Sale**  
 605-425-2600  
 Epiphany Catholic Church  
 Epiphany, SD

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

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

**MARCH 23**  
**Brown County Fair**  
**Foundation Hall of Fame**  
**Banquet and Auction**  
 6 p.m.  
 Yelduz Shrine  
 Aberdeen, SD

**MARCH 29**  
**NDFC Tracy Byrd Concert**  
 6 p.m.  
 Holum Expo Building on the  
 Brown County Fairgrounds  
 Aberdeen, SD

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

**APRIL 4**  
**McCrossan Wildest Banquet**  
**Auction in the Midwest**  
 5:30 p.m.  
 \$100 per Ticket  
 Sioux Falls Arena  
 Sioux Falls, SD

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

**APRIL 19**  
**American Legion Post 15**  
**Dance**  
 6 p.m.- 10:30 p.m.  
 El Riad Shrine  
 Sioux Falls, SD

**APRIL 27**  
**Henry's Run 5k Run/Walk**  
 9 a.m.  
 Register online  
 sandfordhealthfoundation.org  
 Falls Park  
 Sioux Falls, SD

**MAY 4-5**  
**Flea Market**  
 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
 605-770-2411  
 Rustic Designs & More  
 Ethan, SD

**MAY 4-12**  
**Spring Show**  
 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
 605-770-2411  
 Rustic Designs & More  
 Ethan, 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.

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