



Sioux Valley Energy

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Cooperative Connections

JUNE 2016 VOL. 17 NO. 2

Rodeo
High School
Athletes
Compete P8-9



SVE Annual Meeting - June 6!



Tim McCarthy
General Manager/CEO

The Sioux Valley Energy

annual meeting is right around the corner and we are excited for this year's event! We are setting the annual meeting on FIRE with Flowtricks! Flowtricks will showcase its amazing fire performances, glow dancing and juggling. The Flowtricks Entertainment team has over 60 combined years of training in martial arts, acrobatics, dancing, flow arts and fire spinning. Their skills extend far beyond spinning fire. The complimentary meal,

meeting and entertainment will be held on Monday, June 6 at the Swiftel Center in Brookings SD.

Several years ago as annual meeting attendance began declining, the SVE Board of Directors started to think about how to engage members. As a result, the Board made the decision to create a more family-friendly event. In the past several years, our annual meetings have included activities such as a carnival, baseball game, concert, magic show and rodeo.

We know how precious your time is with your family and we understand that most children would rather not sit through a long, tedious meeting. Our organization values the time you have with your family and we hope the SVE Annual Meeting has or will become an event everyone can enjoy and look forward to.

While there is an entertainment value to this year's meeting, there will also be an important decision the membership needs to make regarding how the cooperative handles director vacancies. In the past, if a director has resigned in the middle

of his or her term, the board sends a notice to the membership in that district seeking applicants for the open position. Under the current policy, the Board President appoints a special committee which includes the chair, the incumbent director, and directors from the surrounding districts. The board then makes an appointment for the remainder of the unexpired term.

The proposed bylaw amendment would put more control in the hands of the members. It would require that the remainder of any vacancy be filled by the vote of members at the next regular district meeting. If the district meeting is more than ninety days from the time a vacancy occurs, the normal petition, nomination and election process will be used. If the next district meeting is ninety days or fewer from the time a vacancy occurs, nominations will be taken from the floor. The director elected to fill the unexpired portion of a term will be seated immediately.

What is so unique about being a member of an electric cooperative is that you really do own a piece of this cooperative.

Sioux Valley Energy
A Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Sioux Valley Energy' Annual Meeting

Monday, June 6, 2016

Meeting Location: Swiftel Center, Brookings SD
824 32nd Avenue -- Brookings SD 57006

✓ **BYLAW VOTE TO BE HELD**

There will be a proposed bylaw amendment on the ballot at the annual meeting this year. The proposed change deals with how the cooperative handles director vacancies. Proposed changes can be found on www.siouxvalleyenergy.com or in the newsletter.

SCHEDULE

5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Registration, Complimentary Meal, Bingo and Children's Activities

6:30 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.
Annual Meeting, Proposed Bylaw Vote

7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Flowtricks Entertainment (Aerials, Fire Dancers, Contortionists, & More)

Directions to the Swiftel Center:
From Interstate 29 southbound - Take exit 132 and take a left on HWY 14. From there you will travel east until you run into 32nd Avenue. Take a left onto 32nd Avenue and head north, the Swiftel Center will be on your right.

From Interstate 29 northbound - Take exit 132 and take a right onto HWY 14. From there you will travel east until you run into 32nd Avenue. Take a left onto 32nd Avenue

*Sioux Valley Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc.

That is why engagement is so important. You have a say in this electric cooperative. Your vote counts...on this issue, as well as members who are elected to represent you at our district meetings.

We encourage you to become an engaged member of Sioux Valley Energy—start this year with the annual meeting on June 6. We look forward to seeing you at the Swiftel Center in Brookings, SD!



Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 497-440)

General Manager/CEO

Tim McCarthy

Editor-Carrie Law

Board of Directors

President, Rodney DeMent, Humboldt, S.D.

Vice President, Allan Weinacht, Colton, S.D.

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Bruce Martinson, Jasper, Minn.

Gregg Johnson, Pipestone, Minn.

Gary Fish, Brandon, S.D.

Mark Kahler, Madison, S.D.

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Website: www.siouxvalleyenergy.com

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Sioux Valley Energy's headquarters, Colman, S.D.

SVE Solar Project Stats

April 2016 Output:
2924 kWh's

April Capacity Factors:
South array = 17.2%
Southwest = 16.7%
West array = 14.5%
Combined capacity factor = 16.4%

Annual output: 31,024 kWh
Annual Capacity Factor: 14.3%

For more information log on to:
<http://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/content/solar-project>

Sioux Valley Energy Solar Project



- Constructed in April 2015, Energized in May 2015
- 24.8 kW (Enough Power for 2 homes)
- 80 panels on low profile racking
- Panels face south, southwest and west
- 19 posts, 8 ft long, cemented in 5 ft hole
- There are no batteries used in this design
- Panels placed at 35 degree tilt
- Built and installed by SVE employees
- Array installed for less than \$4 per watt
- Estimated life of array is between 30 and 50 years
- Power that is produced is put back on to the SVE grid
- Solar Edge inverter monitoring system



SIOUX VALLEY ENERGY

A Sustainable Energy Cooperative

Summer Electrical Safety Tips: Outdoor Hazards

Summer is the time when everyone wants to play outside, so it is important that everyone knows what possible electrical safety hazards to avoid in the out-of-doors. Go around the outside of your home and through your neighborhood with your family and show them where telephone poles and electrical lines are located. Explain the following so that everyone understands the dangers associated with them:

- Never play near or touch a power line with any part of your body, a toy, a stick or any other object whatsoever. Assume at all times that any power lines you see are live and dangerous. If you see a downed power line, stay well away and report it to your local utility company immediately.
- Never approach an electrical substation (or downed power lines) for any reason whatsoever. Period. If a friend, family member or a pet has entered this area, do not try to rescue them yourself – call 911 immediately.
- Never climb on or play around a utility pole. In fact,



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALLAMAKEE CLAYTON ELECTRIC

never post any signs or flyers on utility poles either as this can endanger you and utility workers that have to work on those poles.

- Never throw shoes or articles of clothing up onto power lines and never try to retrieve any object already hanging from a power line.
- To avoid getting kites, model aircraft or any other airborne toys stuck in power lines, play with these things in wide open spaces like parks or fields far away from power lines.

• Kids love to climb trees in the summer, but they should never climb trees that are too close to power lines; even if the tree isn't touching a line, the extra weight from someone climbing the tree could cause a branch to touch the line, which would be dangerous. In fact, if you feel that any trees in your yard or neighborhood are too close to power lines, talk with your local utility about having them trimmed or possibly removed.

• Keep an eye on the weather. Almost 100 people die each year and another 500 are severely injured from lightning strikes. If a thunderstorm is approaching, go indoors and stay there until the danger has passed.

Source: rootelectric.com

Kids' Corner Safety Poster

"Keep extension cords out of high-traffic areas like doorways or walkways where they pose a tripping hazard."



Lyla Michalek, 7 years old
Lyla is the daughter of Anthony Michalek, Okaton, S.D. He is a member of West Central Electric Cooperative, Murdo, S.D.

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.

STAND WITH CO-OPS



Dairy Delicious



Becki's Coconut Cream Cake

1 white cake mix
3 eggs
1/3 cup vegetable oil
1/2 tsp. coconut extract
1 cup sour cream
1 (8 oz.) can coconut milk

Frosting:
3 (4 oz.) pkgs. cream cheese, softened
1 cup powdered sugar
1 (8 oz.) container Cool Whip

Combine the cake mix, oil, eggs, sour cream and coconut milk. Mix until well blended. Spread batter in greased and floured 9x13-inch pan. Bake at 350°F. for 25 to 30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. For frosting, mix cream cheese and powdered sugar until smooth. Fold in Cool Whip. Frost cooled cake and sprinkle with additional coconut.

Becki Hauser, Tripp

Elvis Pie

1 cup creamy peanut butter
1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
1/3 cup plus 1/4 cup sugar, divided
1-1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
2 cups cold heavy cream, divided
1 (9 inch) graham cracker piecrust
2 large bananas, cut into 1/4-inch slices
Chopped roasted peanuts

Cream together peanut butter, cream cheese, 1/3 cup sugar and vanilla at medium speed. In a separate bowl, whip 1 cup heavy cream until soft peaks form. Carefully fold whipped cream into peanut butter mixture until completely combined. Scrape half the filling into the piecrust and smooth with spatula. Layer sliced bananas on top of filling. Spread remaining filling over bananas. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until set, at least 1 hour. To make topping, whip remaining cream and sugar together until soft peaks form. Spread over pie. Sprinkled with chopped nuts.

Lynn Holzerland, Waubay

French Vanilla Coffee Mix

1/3 cup instant coffee
1 cup instant powdered milk
1/2 cup nondairy creamer
1/3 cup sugar
1/4 cup French Vanilla instant pudding mix

Combine all ingredients; store in a glass jar. For each serving, put 3/4 cup boiling water in mug. Add 2 heaping tsps. of mix; stir well.

Mary Jessen, Holabird

Strawberry Frozen Yogurt Squares

1 (14 oz.) can fat-free sweetened condensed milk, divided
Non-stick cooking spray
1 cup Post Grape-Nuts® or similar cereal
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
Pinch ground cloves
1 (10 oz.) pkg. frozen strawberries, about 2-1/2 cups
3 cups fat-free strawberry yogurt

Measure 1 cup of sweetened condensed milk; set aside. Line 8x8-inch baking pan with foil; spray with non-stick cooking spray. In medium bowl, combine cereal, cinnamon, cloves and remainder of sweetened condensed milk. Spread cereal mixture evenly on bottom of pan, place in freezer. Place strawberries and yogurt in a blender; cover and blend. Add 1 cup sweetened condensed milk; blend until smooth. Pour mixture over cereal, smoothing to edges of pan. Cover with foil (or plastic wrap) and freeze 8 hours or until firm. Use edges of foil to loosen and remove from pan; let recipe thaw for 5 to 10 minutes. Cut into squares and serve. Squares may be individually wrapped and stored in freezer for single servings. Makes 9 servings.

Nutritional Facts Per Serving: Calories 200, Total Fat 0g, Sat Fat 0g, Cholesterol 5mg, Sodium 150mg, Total Carbohydrates 42g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Protein 7g, Calcium 20% Daily Value

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Johnny Cake

1/2 cup butter
3 eggs, beaten
1 cup sugar
1/2 tsp. salt
1 cup sour cream
1 tsp. soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1 cup flour
1 cup corn meal

Combine all ingredients. Pour into a 9x9-inch or 9x13-inch pan. Bake at 400°F. for 20 to 25 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Judy Jensen, Langford

Potato Salad Dressing

1/2 cup sugar
2 eggs
1/4 cup vinegar
3 T. butter
1 tsp. mustard
Salt and pepper to taste
1 cup mayonnaise

In a saucepan, mix together sugar, eggs, vinegar, butter, mustard, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil; boil until thick. Cool. Add mayonnaise; stirring well. Toss with your favorite potato salad ingredients

Mary Alice Bartel, Wolsey

Please send your favorite dessert, salad and garden produce 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 2016. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Students Honored at Scholar of the Year Banquet

Some of the area's most impressive young people were honored Saturday, April 30, during the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives Scholar of the Year banquet held on the campus of Lake Area Technical Institute (LATI) in Watertown.

The 35 students from eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota were chosen throughout the school year as the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week. For the 14th year, the Scholar of the Week program recognized students for academic achievement, co-curricular involvement and community service. After they're selected the students are featured in weekly segments which air Mondays on KSFY Television and each student receives a \$100 scholarship from their local Touchstone Energy Cooperative for being chosen as the Scholar of the Week.

SVE members--Alexandra Degroot (Sioux Valley HS), Austin Arends (Tri-Valley HS) and Nicole Thomes (Brandon Valley HS) were honored during the banquet because they were

featured as the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Scholar of the Week.

Former WNBA star Olympia Scott served as the keynote speaker during the event. Scott is a Stanford University graduate and member of the Stanford Hall of Fame who went on to play 10 seasons in the WNBA, winning two world championships. KSFY News anchor Courtney Collen served as the master of ceremonies.

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota are part of a network of consumer-owned utilities which provide safe and reliable electricity to more than 115,000 homes and businesses. The cooperatives have sponsored the Scholar of the Week program since 2002. In that time Touchstone Energy Cooperatives have awarded over \$75,000 in scholarships to high school seniors as part of the Scholar of the Week program.



Available to SVE Members...

The Co-op Connections Card.

Local and national business discounts are available to you as a member of Sioux Valley Energy. Go to <http://www.connections.coop/> and click on co-op deals!

Co-op Connections® Card



SIoux VALLEY ENERGY

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



2016 Sioux Valley Energy ANNUAL MEETING

Monday,
June 6th



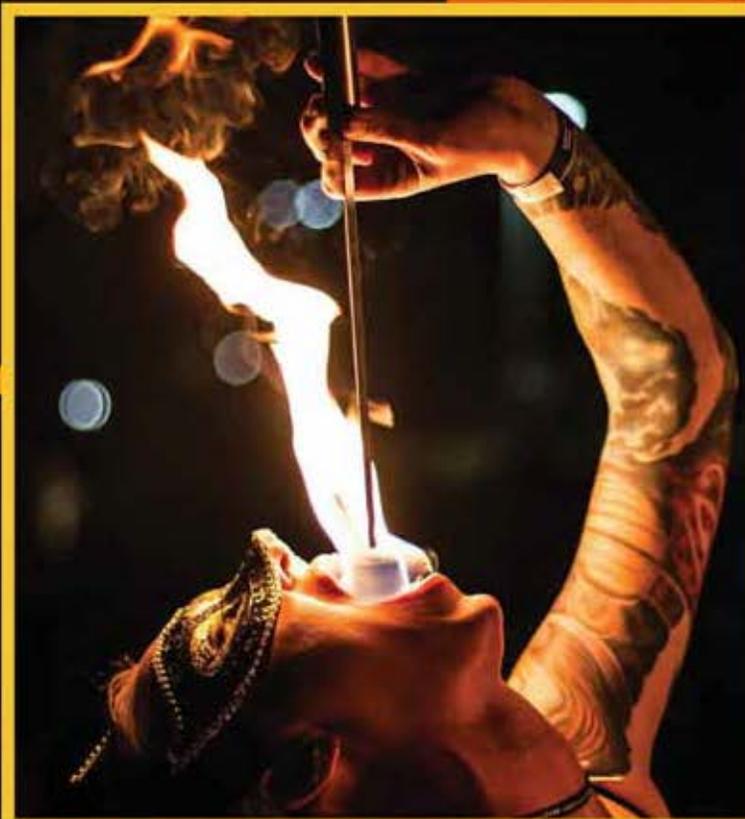
Swiftel Center,
Brookings



5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Registration, Complimentary Meal,
Bingo & Booths

6:30 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.
Annual Meeting

7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
FlowTricks Entertainment
(Aerials, Fire Dancers,
Contortionists, & More)



Food Drive

- *Donate 3 non-perishable food items and receive a LED night light
- *Donate 5 non-perishable food items and also be put in a drawing for one of two-\$50 bill credits.

Competing with Heart

S.D. High School Rodeo Athletes Hit the Arena

By
Brenda
Kleinjan

On the cover: Siarra Johnson of Castlewood was the Barrel Racing Champion with 76.0 points. **Below:** Jeremiah Johnson of Huron competes in steer wrestling. He placed 15th overall in the 2015 finals.

Photos Courtesy CowboyImages.net

WHILE MANY OF THE AREA'S HIGH SCHOOL athletes will have put their sports gear away for the summer having competed in their sport's state event, the South Dakota's high school rodeo athletes are just hitting their stride.

For high school rodeo athletes, June is their month. South Dakota regional rodeos are set for the first two weekends in June with Buffalo, Wall, Highmore and Huron hosting events June 3-5 while arenas in Dupree, Sturgis, Fort Pierre and Watertown will welcome athletes June 10-12. In Minnesota, regional rodeos are scheduled for weekends in May at Verndale, Long Prairie and Fergus Falls and June 4-5 in St. Peter with the state finals held June 10-12 in Hugo.

No matter where they compete, the approximately 450 members of the South Dakota High School Rodeo Association will have their sights set on Belle Fourche, host of the 2016 South Dakota High School Rodeo Finals June 14-18.

For Digger Rutten, public relations chairman

for South Dakota High School Rodeo Association, high school rodeo is at the heart of keeping the spirit of the West going.

"It's a good event and keeps the western heritage alive in South Dakota is what we stress with the athletes," said Rutten.

He notes that you'll find the state's high school rodeo athletes competing in school events throughout the year from football and volleyball to basketball and wrestling and golf and track.

"The kids are involved in other sports in their school, too, but the high school rodeo is something the whole family travels together. It's more of a family sport," said Rutten.

Rutten estimates that 300 contestants will qualify for the state finals. And, in the stands will be hundreds of family members and friends.

"It's a great fun family event, fun to compete in and fun to watch," said Rutten.

South Dakota's Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives have been supporters of high school rodeo



for several years. The cooperative brand adorns barrels used in regional and state competitions in the Rushmore State. And, athletes who earn short go shirts through their performances will carry a bit of co-op pride with them whenever they wear their shirt. As the short go shirt sponsors, the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives logo is stitched onto the shirt.

Nearly 120 such shirts were awarded after the 2015 finals.

According to Rutten, athletes qualify for the state final's short go by combing the scores earned at the regional rodeos with the results of the first two go's at the state rodeo.

The top four point getters in each event qualify for the national team while the 11 other athletes are recognized for making the short go.

In South Dakota, rodeo athletes compete in bareback riding, barrel racing, breakaway roping, bull riding, boys' cutting, girls' cutting, goat tying, pole bending, reined cow horse, saddle bronc, steer wrestling, team roping and tie-down. There is also a queen competition and shooting events.

"High school kids aren't running for money. They rodeo for the points and prizes," said Rutten, noting some differences between high school rodeo and pro rodeo.

"It's more the competition to see how good you can be versus going for some money," he said.

Additionally, high school rodeo has events that one doesn't see in some other levels of rodeo.

"Pole bending is something you see in high school and 4-H rodeo, but not at some of the other levels," Rutten said. "We have goat tying which you don't see in the pros and cutting and reined cow horse is a new event for us."

Behind the scenes at the rodeos are dozens of volunteers who work to keep the sport going for the teens.

Each one of the committees that hosts a regional rodeo has a committee of volunteers that puts on the regional rodeos.

A state level board of directors helps oversee things statewide, but regional committees and the state finals host committee are crucial to the program's success.

"The regional meets are designed so that they don't have to travel more than 200 miles to compete," said Rutten.

For more on Minnesota High School rodeo, visit <http://www.mnhсроdeo.com/>. For more information on South Dakota High School Rodeo, go to <http://www.sdhсроdeo.com/>

Huron to Host National Junior High Finals Rodeo

The South Dakota State Fairgrounds in Huron, S.D., has been selected to host the 2018 and 2019 National Junior High Finals Rodeo (NJHFR) by the National High School Rodeo Association. The NJHFR is the second largest rodeo in the world with approximately 1,000 contestants and over 1,500 entries. During these events, three countries are represented including 42 U.S. states, five Canadian Provinces and the country of Australia.

While the official rodeo performances take place over the course of seven days, the entire event encompasses a total of 15 days from set-up to tear-down. Along with the rodeo, comes one of the largest western trade shows in the nation. There are also a myriad of other contestant recreational and sporting activities including one of the fastest growing shooting competitions in the U.S. Officials estimate the event will have an economic impact of over \$9.2 million for Huron and the surrounding area.

"This is going to be a great undertaking for Huron and the SD State Fairgrounds," stated Peggy Besch, SD State Fair manager, "but, we are up for the task! This will clearly be a partnership between the State Fair, the City of Huron, Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau, Beadle County, businesses and organizations in the Huron area, and many volunteers."

"Not only is this event great for Huron and the SD State Fairgrounds, but it is great for the entire state," said Laurie Shelton, president and CEO of the Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau. "All of these people will be traveling through South Dakota. They will be stopping for fuel, food, lodging and visiting the many tourist attractions along the way."

The NJHFR is scheduled for June 24-30, 2018, and June 23-29, 2019, in Huron, S.D.

Created in 2004, the NHSRA Junior High Division was established to bring the excitement of the sport to sixth, seventh, and eighth graders and to serve as a feeder system into the high school ranks of the Association. Today, all 48 states and provinces that belong to the NHSRA also produce a Junior High Division as well, with over 2,500 members in total now competing. Junior High Division students compete in a variety of events, including Barrel racing, pole bending, goat tying, breakaway roping, tie-down roping, chute dogging, team roping, ribbon roping, junior bull riding, bareback steer riding and saddle bronc steer riding.

Gallup, N.M., hosted the NJHFR from 2005 through 2013. The rodeo moved to Des Moines, Iowa, for 2014-15 and the 2016 NJHFR is set for June 19-25 in Lebanon, Tenn., which will also host the 2017 finals. South Dakota's state junior high finals were held May 13-15, 2016, in Rapid City.



Rachael McCoy (top) and Lathen Stevens (below) were among recipients of the South Dakota High School Rodeo Association's short go shirts. McCoy earned her shirt in the pole bending event while Stevens competed in the saddle bronc event. They were among nearly 120 SDHRSRA athletes receiving short go shirts in 2015.

Water Heaters Available at SVE

Sioux Valley Energy is excited to offer members special pricing on Marathon water heaters. Members can purchase an 85 or 105 gallon water heater for \$200 plus applicable tax. The water heater must be used for residential domestic water heating applications, installed at a service location receiving electricity from the cooperative, and connected to the load management program. Agricultural or commercial applications are not eligible for the special pricing program. The water heater must be installed within 90 days of purchase.

Why choose a Marathon water heater?

Lifetime Tank Warranty

- Enjoy a lifetime of hot water! The tank is built to last for as long as you own your home. Water heaters installed in single family dwellings carry a lifetime tank warranty/6-years parts. Some restrictions apply for residential rental properties (5 year tank/1-year parts).
- This is the last water heater you will need to buy eliminating the cost of installing a new water heater every 10 years which is the national average.
- Proven design since 1989. Unmatched strength, toughness and durability.

Easy Installation and Service

- Lightweight and easy to install.
- Quick maintenance due to a bowl-shaped tank bottom that drains completely and has no anode rod to replace.
- The Customer Electrical Services Department at Sioux Valley Energy provides quick, friendly service if your Marathon water heater needs repair or replacement.

Non-Metallic Tank

- Seamless, blow-molded polybutene inner tank will not rust or corrode.
- Rugged polyethylene outer jacket resists dents and scratches.
- Offers the best durability to withstand the harshest of environments and eliminates smelly water due to chemical reactions with sulfates.

High Efficiency

All sizes of Marathon water heaters have 2 ½ inches of polyurethane foam insulation that minimizes stand-by heat loss allowing only a 5 degree Fahrenheit loss in 24 hours which saves you money.

Sizes/Special Pricing

| Gallon Capacity | Height (in.) | Diameter (in.) | Cost |
|-----------------|--------------|----------------|-------|
| 105 | 70 ¾ | 30 ¼ | \$200 |
| 85 | 70 ¼ | 28 ¼ | \$200 |
| 50 | 66 ¾ | 23 ½ | \$400 |

*Cost does not include applicable tax

What is the load management program?

Load management refers to the control of various customer electric loads during times of peak usage on the electric system. Sioux Valley Energy electricians install and maintain the load

management receiver and associated wiring. During times of peak electric usage, load management helps shift the load peak to times when customers are not using as much electricity by controlling equipment such as water heaters and air conditioning. By managing these loads, the cooperative is able to reduce the potential costs of wholesale power purchases which saves not only resources, but money, for you the member-owner. Approximately half of Sioux Valley Energy's annual power costs are determined by a 30-minute peak demand period that occurs each month of the year. This is why the load management program is critical and benefits every member of the cooperative.



When is load management initiated?

Our power suppliers, East River Electric in South Dakota and L&O Power in Minnesota, initiate load management. It typically occurs during times of temperature extremes, mainly in the afternoons and evenings during high temperatures in the summer and mornings and evenings during low temperatures in the winter. However, load management is used every month of the year to some degree to help keep members' energy costs as low as possible. South Dakota members can log on to the East River website at <http://www.eastriver.coop> and click the load management tab to check the current status of loads controlled. Minnesota members may contact Sioux Valley Energy's dispatch center to check the status of load management.

Water heaters, continued from page 10.

How is my water heater controlled?

In South Dakota, water heaters may be controlled up to 4 consecutive hours. If load management is still needed after that time period, the water heater will be cycled on for one hour and off for two hours for the duration of the control period. The average water heater will heat 22 to 26 gallons of water over a one hour period. In Minnesota, water heaters may be controlled up to 45 minutes of every hour depending on the severity of the peak. Control periods are completed by 11:00 p.m. so members can count on starting the day with a full tank of hot water. Since Marathon water heaters have a high energy efficiency rating and larger capacity, generally members will not experience any inconveniences during a control period.

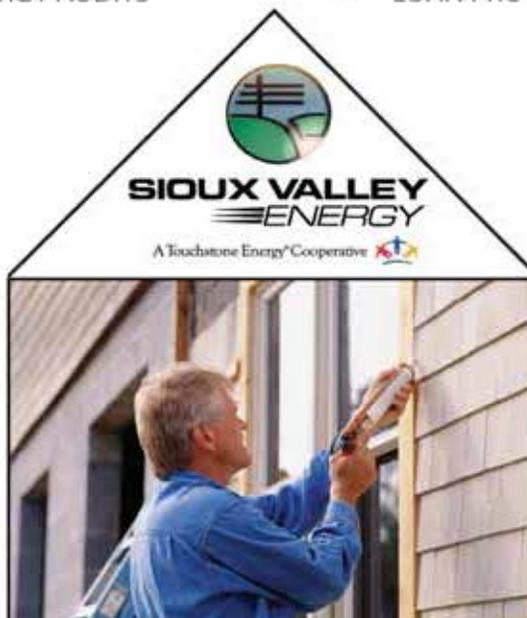
To learn more about how you can have hot water heater for life, call an Energy Services Specialist at 800-234-1960. Water heaters can be purchased at Sioux Valley Energy's service centers located in Colman, Brandon and Pipestone.

*Some restrictions apply. Special pricing program is available through December 31, 2016. Upfront special pricing is in lieu of a monthly load management billing credit.

Planning to do some home improvements this summer?

Call Sioux Valley Energy today to learn more about incentives to help make your home more efficient!

- HEAT PUMPS
- WEATHERIZATION PROJECTS
- ENERGY AUDITS
- LED LIGHTING
- WATER HEATERS
- LOAN PROGRAMS



1-800-234-1960

www.siouxvalleyenergy.com

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Co-ops Vote

Co-ops Launch Non-Partisan Voter Engagement Program

AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES HAVE LAUNCHED a non-partisan, nationwide effort to promote civic engagement and voter participation in the communities they serve.

Jeffrey Connor, interim CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, unveiled the Co-ops Vote program in time for the 2016 election

cycle.

"Through Co-ops Vote, we want to help our members know when elections are, what's at stake and how to make their voices heard," Connor said. "Who folks vote for isn't really as important as the fact that they do vote."

The Co-ops Vote initiative focuses on eight

By
Justin LaBerge



issues that are important to health and prosperity of communities served by electric cooperatives:

- Rural Broadband Access
- Hiring and Honoring Veterans
- Low-Income Energy Assistance
- Cybersecurity
- Water Regulation
- Rural Health Care Access
- Affordable and Reliable Energy
- Renewable Energy

“Electric cooperatives are perfectly designed to help address these important issues,” Connor said. “We can make politics ‘local’ again because civic engagement is part of our DNA.”

A new website, vote.coop, offers co-op members information on the voter registration process in their state, dates of elections, information on the candidates running in those elections, and explanations of the eight key issues the campaign aims to address.

In keeping with its non-partisan goals, the initiative will not be endorsing specific candidates for office.

Mel Coleman, president of NRECA and CEO of North Arkansas Electric Cooperative said the program would help ensure the voices of rural Americans are heard.

“We want to make sure our government knows that rural America matters,” Coleman said. “This campaign isn’t about divisive, partisan issues. It’s about real people in real places facing real challenges. It’s about our co-ops living out the principles of our movement: Concern for community and democratic control.”

Connor cited partisan gridlock in Washington, the explosive growth of money in politics and the effects of gerrymandering as important reasons for launching the program. In 2014, 318 of

435 House races had a margin of victory of 20 points or more¹, and 30 House candidates – 16 Democrats and 14 Republicans representing 11 states – didn’t even face an opponent in the general election².

“Elections aren’t won and lost in November anymore,” Connor said. “They’re really decided in primaries months sooner, when fewer voters recognize the opportunity to vote, fewer participate and only a handful of issues are up for debate.”

This results in a Congress where more members represent the extremes of each political party and are less inclined to seek compromise and bipartisan solutions to problems.

“The electric cooperative movement has always been non-partisan, and our communities are facing too many challenges to have a government crippled by bickering,” Coleman said.

“When our parents and grandparents set out to electrify rural America, they didn’t have time to ask the person next to them about their views on economic or social policy. Their economic policy was ‘we need to save this community’ and their social policy was ‘let’s do it together.’ I hope the Co-ops Vote program can help rekindle that spirit of cooperation.”

For more information about Co-ops Vote and the impact of these eight key issues on the people of South Dakota, western Minnesota and north central Nebraska, contact your local electric cooperative or visit vote.coop.

Justin LaBerge writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.



CO-OPS VOTE

A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

- ✓ Pledge to be a co-op voter
- ✓ Find key election information
- ✓ Learn about the issues
- ✓ Register to vote



✓ TAKE THE PLEDGE

- ✓ Commit today to make your voice heard on Election Day!
- ✓ Get reminders about the upcoming election.
- ✓ Recruit your friends, family, and co-workers to become co-op voters today.



CO-OPS VOTE
A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

VOTE.COOP

¹ https://ballotpedia.org/Margin_of_victory_analysis_for_the_2014_congressional_elections

² <http://atr.rollcall.com/elections-2014-running-unopposed-congress/>

Electric Cooperative Youth Tour Inspires Students and Fosters Civility

ON A MILD MONDAY EVENING LESS THAN A WEEK after Mardi Gras, 18-year-old Collin Craig was sitting in a downtown New Orleans hotel room talking to himself. He wasn't having some sort of psychological episode; he was practicing an important speech.

The next day Collin would stand on a stage in a giant exposition hall at the New Orleans Convention Center. Behind him would be a dazzling array of video screens, some projecting his image larger than life. In front of him would be a sea of 6,000 faces, all several decades older than him, and all quietly waiting to hear what this high school senior from Slocomb, Ala., had to say.

Tuesday morning arrived, and Collin stood backstage in the green room waiting. The emcee called his name, music started playing, and Collin climbed up the steps and into the spotlight. He stood at the podium, and, reading from the kind of teleprompter that's typically reserved for presidents, told the crowd gathered for the 74th annual meeting of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) about the journey he'd taken in the past year.

A year earlier, Collin had been selected by Wire-

grass Electric Cooperative to participate in the 2015 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

Every June, nearly 1,700 students from electric cooperatives across the country, including more than 70 participants from Minnesota and South Dakota, converge in our nation's capital for the Youth Tour. Students spend the week visiting monuments and museums, meeting Senators and members of Congress from their state, learning about leadership and the cooperative business model, and forging lifelong friendships with fellow Youth Tour participants from far-away places who were strangers just a few days before.

Each of the 44 states that participate in the program selects one member of their delegation to represent it on the Youth Leadership Council. Members of the council come back to Washington for additional leadership development experiences, serve as youth ambassadors at events hosted by their state's electric co-ops and represent their states at the annual meeting of America's electric cooperatives.

The Youth Leadership Council elects one of its members to be the group's spokesperson and deliver an address at the annual meeting. Last year, they selected Collin.

By Justin LaBerge

Minnesota's Youth Leadership Council representative, Shantelle Des Marais, center, poses with fellow YLCers.



In his speech, Collin told the audience, "there is a bigger picture that can only be reached through the actions we take to make the world a better place. We can't do that by ourselves. It's a collective effort from the leaders in our community who take action and look beyond their own lives."

When he concluded his remarks, he was given a standing ovation and NRECA President Mel Coleman praised Collin and his 43 fellow members of the Youth Leadership Council.

Though Collin was the man in the spotlight at the annual meeting, all Youth Leadership Council members are leaders in their schools, communities and extracurricular activities.

Shantelle Des Marais, a freshly minted high school graduate from Pipestone, Minn., is one of them.

As a three-sport athlete and competitive dancer, Shantelle keeps a busy schedule. Though she is active in her community, coaching children enrolled in beginner gymnastics and track programs at the local rec center, she had never really paid attention to politics.

Last year, she saw a flyer for a program sponsored by her local electric cooperative, Sioux Valley Energy, called EmPower Youth Leadership. She talked to her school counselor and applied for the program.

After completing the program, she was selected to be a member of the Minnesota Youth Tour delegation, and was later chosen to be the state's Youth Leadership Council delegate.

"At the start of this whole process, I didn't even know what a co-op was at all," Shantelle said. "Now I've learned so much about the model and the Seven Cooperative Principles, and it reminds me of how I'd like our country to run. I wish we could all keep those principles in mind and be good to one another."

Her experience with Youth Tour and the Youth Leadership Council inspired the 18-year-old to get involved in her first presidential election. Not only did Shantelle caucus for the first time, she was selected to be a county delegate.

"The best thing about this whole experience is that it has opened my eyes to different possibilities," she said.

Another young woman who participated in this eye-opening program was Emma DeMaranville from Tonganoxie, Kan.

Emma was familiar with her local electric cooperative, but had no idea how many different types of cooperatives there are and the impact they've had throughout the U.S. and the world.

Her grandmother had seen the opportunities other students had gained through the Youth Tour program and urged Emma to apply.

An active member of Family Career and Community Leaders of America who also participates in forensics, debate and theatre, Emma was selected to represent Leavenworth-Jefferson Electric as a member of the Kansas Youth Tour delegation.

"Every kid on Youth Tour has big aspirations, and

their goals inspired me to do something with my career and future that could make an impact," Emma said. "Being in the nation's capital with some of the most passionate and intelligent people I have ever met made me feel like I could do anything."

One common theme mentioned by all three of these young leaders was the need to cooperate, be respectful and find common ground to solve problems.

Collin recounted the many spirited conversations he had with other YLC delegates on important issues. "There were times when we might have different opinions, but there were never any fights, rivalries or hatreds. In fact, we used these debates to strengthen each other. We learned how to unite. Diversity doesn't cause adversity, it can demolish it," he said.

Emma said she's gained a better understanding of other people, and the similarities and differences in their lives. "I want to do bipartisan work to make a difference for the people around me. Youth Tour helped me see the struggles others face, and has instilled in me a desire to create change on a global level."

Shantelle said her experiences have helped her realize that great leaders are real people, too. "You go to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial or the Lincoln Memorial, and you think about the great things these leaders did and how they helped me get where I am today. It always feels like something so far off. But then I got to meet my Senators and you realize that they're real people and maybe I could do this some day."

All three of these students plan to attend public universities in their home states this fall, and say the experiences they've gained over the past year have influenced what they'll study and how they plan to live their lives after college.

"If you had asked me a year ago what I wanted to do with my life, I would've said 'I don't know. Probably something with computers.' I still plan to major in computer science, but that's just the foundation for many different things Youth Tour has inspired me to pursue," Collin said.

Youth Tour is a joint investment made by local electric cooperatives, their statewide organizations and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. When Youth Tour participants arrive in Washington each June, the expectation is that they will learn from our political leaders and be inspired to do great things in their communities.

Based on the wisdom and maturity displayed by Collin, Shantelle and Emma, our future is certainly bright, and our current elected leaders could learn as much from the students as the students learn from them.

Justin LaBerge writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Regional Dateline

June 3-5

Buffalo Days

Friday: Cruise-In from 6 to 10:30 p.m., Main Street Downtown

Saturday: Iron Team Triathlon Relay, 2 to 4 person teams, Wave Start at 7 a.m. Finish approximately at 4 p.m. Swimming for 2.4 miles Biking for 112 miles Running for 26.2 miles Dad's Belgian Waffles 7:30 to 10 a.m. at the American Legion, 5K and 10K run at 8:15 a.m., Register at Sanford Luverne Rehab

Arts in the Park from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Luverne City Park, Parade 10 a.m. Main Street, Rock County Speedway Races Doors open at 6 p.m. Races at 7 p.m. **Sunday:** Tales from the Graves (#5) and Pie/Ice Cream Social 1 to 4 p.m., Maplewood Cemetery, Luverne, MN, Contact the Luverne Area Chamber at 507-283-4061 www.luvernechamber.com

June 5

Miss Prairie Village/Miss Prairie Princess Pageant Prairie Village, Madison, SD 605-480-2633 www.prairievillage.org

June 5

Coach Stig FCA Golf Outing Registration: 1 p.m., T-off: 2 p.m., Meadow Creek Golf Course, Volga, SD To reserve your team, contact Kristy Carlson at kcarlson@fca.org or brookingsareafca.org



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHAD COPPERS, S.D. TOURISM

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.

June 6

Gardening with the Masters "Enemy #1" Outdoor Campus Sioux Falls, SD, 605-362-2777

June 7-9

Power Camp, Elementary in the a.m., Middle School in the p.m., Contact Kristy Carlson at kcarlson@fca.org or brookingsareafca.org

June 10

Northern Bull Riding Tour Bull riding at 7 p.m. Prairie Village, Madison, SD 605-256-3644 www.prairievillage.org

June 11

Blue Star Fundraiser Quilt Show/Garden Tour, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Buses running from Beresford Library, Rural Beresford, SD, 605-661-9151

June 14

Seventh Annual Ag Women's Day, First Lutheran Church Activity Center, Brookings, SD 605-692-8003 Ext. 2

June 15-19

Jamboree Days, Hartford, SD 605-941-4297 or facebook.com/jamboreedays

June 17-19

Jesse James Days Garretson, SD, 605-940-3101 www.visitgarretson.com

June 22

McCrossan Golf Classic for Kids and Appreciation BBQ Central Valley Golf Course Noon shotgun start Appreciation BBQ at the Ranch Hartford, SD, Contact Christy Menning or Nikki Williams at 605-339-1203

June 26

Prairie Village Variety Show Prairie Village, Madison, SD 605-256-3644

July 9

Gardening with the Masters "Garden Watering and Weeding in Situ" SHUMC

Events of Special Note

June 3-5

Fort Sisseton Historical Festival, Lake City, SD 605-448-5474

June 14

Seventh Annual Ag Women's Day, First Lutheran Church Activity Center, Brookings, SD 605-692-8003 Ext. 2

Community Garden Sioux Falls, SD, 605-362-2777

July 11

Gardening with the Masters "The Good, The Bad and The Ugly" Outdoor Campus Sioux Falls, SD, 605-362-2777

July 21

Party Like It's 1945 Hanger Dance, 7 to 11 p.m. Maverick Air Center at Sioux Falls Regional Airport Sioux Falls, SD, 605-594-2978 www.cafjoefoss.com

July 30

Women in the Outdoors 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Hunter's Pointe, Humboldt, SD 605-553-3634 or 605-366-8528

August 27

Poker Run/Supper/Silent Auction, Special Olympics United Wolf Pack Team Sioux Falls, SD, 605-261-9341