



Sioux Valley Energy

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Cooperative Connections

JANUARY 2016 VOL. 16 NO. 9



**Youth
Tour:
Inspiring
Teens
Since 1963**

P8-9

Time to Give Thanks

SVE Employees Dedicated to Membership



Tim McCarthy
General Manager/CEO

Wouldn't it be nice if you got back a portion of the profit companies made from the products that you purchase from them? Well, that's the case with Sioux Valley Energy (SVE)... whether you know it or not—you are an owner in this electric cooperative. As a not-for-profit cooperative, owned by its members, SVE doesn't technically earn profits. If revenues exceed expenses, the co-op retains a "margin." Each year, the

margin is assigned to members in proportion to the amount each is billed for electricity used during that year. These "capital credits" reflect your ownership in SVE but are not automatically returned to you. The Cooperative uses capital credits to fund operating activities and reduce borrowing, with the intent of repaying this capital to you in later years.

After reviewing the Cooperative's finances each year, the Board of Directors determines whether a portion of capital credits can be retired, or returned, to members. The Board also evaluates the method, basis, priority and timing of all capital credits retirements. The retirement amount will vary from member to member and from year to year because capital credits are based on the dollar amount of electricity a member

purchases.

We often get questions from members asking when they will get their capital credit "check" in the mail. If you are a current member, you won't actually receive a check. Instead, you will see a credit on your electric bill in December or January. This is the most efficient and cost effective way to get your patronage capital back to you.

The Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors has approved a \$1.41-million general capital credit retirement. The cooperative will be retiring a portion of the 1991 and 2014 allocation. Individuals and organizations who were members of SVE in those years will be receiving a portion of their capital credits. The amount of each allocation and retirement is based on how much individual members paid the co-op for electric service during that period.

The SVE Board also approved a special capital credit retirement as a result of a \$1,028,913 credit from its power suppliers. This special retirement, tied to the years in which the credit originated, is for members who received electric service from SVE during the years of 2005-2009 and will be proportionately distributed.

Watch for your bill credit in this month's electric bill! Want to know more about capital credits? Here are a few frequently asked questions and answers.

Capital Credit FAQs

How are capital credits calculated?

The amount of capital credits you earn in a given year is based on the amount of capital you contribute to the Cooperative through payment of your monthly electric bills and the amount of operating margins realized by the Cooperative. Basically, the more electricity you use, the greater your ownership in SVE, and the larger your capital credits allocation will be.

Is every member's distribution the same?

No, each member's distribution varies based on the dollar amount of electricity a member purchased during that year.

Do I have to be a member for an entire year to earn capital credits?

Capital credits are calculated based on the amount you are billed for electricity. If you are billed for service for even one month, you will accumulate some capital credits if SVE earned margins during the year.

What do I have to do to start accumulating capital credits?

Your membership in SVE automatically activates your capital credits account. SVE allocates and retires capital credits for you and provides you with notice of these processes.

How often will I receive an allocation notice?

You should receive an allocation notice annually after the finances for the previous year have been audited and the Cooperative's books have been closed.



A Touchstone Energy Cooperative
The power of human connections

Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 497-440)

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

Capital Credit FAQs (continued)

What's the difference between allocated and retired capital credits?

Allocated capital credits appear as an entry on the permanent financial records of the Cooperative and reflect your ownership in SVE. When capital credits are retired, a check or bill credit is issued to you, and your ownership in the Cooperative is reduced. After reviewing the Cooperative's finances, the Board of Directors determines the method, basis, priority, and timing of all capital credits retirements.

Can I receive my cumulative capital credits allocation now?

Cumulative capital credits allocations are simply a record of your ownership in the Cooperative. Because the capital is not held in an account and is reinvested to support operating activities, the entire balance cannot be retired to you at once.

Can I use the capital credits that have been allocated to me to pay my electric bill?

Because capital credits have no cash value until the Board of Directors calls for the retirement of a previous year's allocated capital credits, they can't be used to pay your current bill. Your electric bill is due now, but you may not be entitled to receive your capital credits for many years.

What happens to my capital credits when I leave the Co-op?

Your capital credits remain on the books in your name and account number until they are retired. Because payments are made years after capital credits have been allocated, you should be sure that we always have your current mailing address. We may retire capital credits, outside the normal schedule for retirements, when the Co-op receives proper notification that a member or former member is deceased. Contact a customer service representative at 1-800-234-1960 to update your address.

When will my capital credits be retired?

When determined by the Board of Directors, capital credits will be retired to the following groups:

1. The estates of deceased members.
2. The oldest outstanding year(s) that have not yet been retired.
3. The most recent year(s) that have been allocated.

I am no longer with the Co-op and have accumulated capital credits. My distribution is less than \$10. What happens to my capital credits?

In order to limit the administrative costs related to distributing capital credits, SVE does not automatically send checks to former members with a capital credits distribution of less than \$10. Those credits will remain on SVE's books as unissued capital credits. Former members with additional allocations will receive a capital credits check once the allocation increases the distribution total to \$10 or greater.

What will happen to my capital credits if I pass away before they are eligible for distribution?

When SVE receives proper documentation to settle the estate of a current or former member who has passed away, the Co-op will distribute capital credits in accordance with our Capital Credits Policy. SVE discounts the value of these credits using the present value of each year's distribution compared to the expected payout of 23 years from when the capital credits were accumulated.

My capital credits distribution is larger than my December bill. Do I still get those credits?

Yes, if your capital credits distribution bill credit is larger than the total of your December bill, any remaining credits will roll over onto your January bill.

Speaking Out

The start of the new year brings many state legislatures back to their respective capitol cities to tend to the business of the people.

The Nebraska Legislature convenes Jan. 6 and South Dakota lawmakers start work back in Pierre on Jan. 12. Minnesota's Legislature reconvenes at noon on March 8.

While lawmakers are in the capitol, there are several ways to reach them:

South Dakota:

Write to local legislators in care of the Legislative Research Council, Capitol Building, 3rd Floor – 500 East Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501-5070

South Dakota Senators can be reached at 605-773-3821 while Representatives can be reached at 605-773-3251. During session, faxes can be sent to legislators at 605-773-6806

To e-mail legislators, go to: <http://legis.sd.gov/Contact/LegislatorEmail.aspx> and select the legislator's name from the drop-down box.

Minnesota:

To reach Minnesota Senators, write to: Honorable (Full Name), Minnesota State Senate, 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155-1606

To reach Minnesota Representatives, write to: Honorable (Full Name), Minnesota House of Representatives, (Room #) State Office Building, 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155-1298

Email is most effective if it is not a blanket mailing to all members. When sending an email, remember to include your name, postal address and phone number.

For more information on contacting Minnesota legislators, go to <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/faq/faqtoc?id=47>

Nebraska:

Find contact information for Nebraska Senators at http://nebraskalegislature.gov/senators/senator_list.php

Electric Blanket Safety Tips Can Save Your Life

During the cold of winter, an electric blanket may provide extra warmth in your home. Please consider several important safety tips to assure your electric blanket does not start a fire.

- Make certain your blanket is approved by a nationally recognized testing agency.
- When not in use, turn your blanket off. Most models have no internal temperature control that turns the heat off when the blanket temperature gets too hot.
- Place your blanket on top of you, not below you. Sitting or lying on an electric blanket may damage the internal coils of the blanket, exposing the heating element to a combustible material (the blanket).
- Never place items such as books, pillows or stuffed animals on top of the blanket. These items can trap the heat, leading to elevated temperatures and serve as a source of ignition.

• Keep the blanket flat, not crumpled or in a ball. If left on, a crumpled blanket allows for excessive heat build-up within the blanket. Always turn the blanket off when leaving the room.

- Do not wash an electric blanket.

The twisting, tugging and turning action of the washing machine will most certainly damage the internal coils.

• Unplug your blanket if you see or smell smoke coming from it. Discoloration of the blanket may indicate the heating elements are burning internally.

If you have any doubt about the safety of your blanket, discontinue using it. Electric blankets are usually a safe way to add a little warmth and are widely used throughout the country. However, this is only true if blankets are well maintained and properly used.

Source: seattle.gov



Kids' Corner Safety Poster



“Play safe around cords.”

Allison Bruns, 10 years old
She is the daughter of Matt and Kim Bruns, Madison, 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.

Super Soups



Creamy Lasagna Soup

- 1 (23 oz.) can low-sodium, low fat tomato soup
- 3 cups hot water (equivalent of using 1 empty soup can)
- 3 cups low fat milk (equivalent of using 1 empty soup can)
- 3 T. Tone's Italian seasoning
- 1 lb. ground beef, cooked and drained
- 10 lasagna noodles, broken into pieces
- 8 oz. low fat cream cheese
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

Combine first 5 ingredients until near boiling on medium high heat. Cook lasagna noodles in boiling water until soft; drain. Add to soup mixture. When heated through, add cream cheese, stirring thoroughly. Serve with mozzarella cheese sprinkled on top. Makes 12 servings.

Julie Thonvold, Erwin

Crockpot Potato Soup

- 1 (32 oz.) bag diced hash browns
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 32 oz. chicken broth
- 3 oz. real bacon bits
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- 8 oz. cream cheese (do not use light)
- Salt and pepper to taste (may add onion powder and celery salt if desired)

Place all ingredients in crockpot except cream cheese. Cook on low, covered, for 8 hours. Add cream cheese that has been cut into small chunks during last hour of cooking, stirring often. Top with additional Cheddar cheese if desired.

Diana Spence, Utica

Crockpot Harvest Soup

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 (29 oz.) can Veg-All
- 1 (28 oz.) can diced tomatoes
- 1 (15 oz.) can tomato sauce
- 1 (28 oz.) can green beans
- 1 (15 oz.) can corn
- 1 (7 oz.) can green chilies
- 2 T. jalapenos, if desired
- 2 tsp. chili powder
- 6 beef bouillon cubes

Brown and drain ground beef. Place in crockpot; add remaining ingredients. Do not drain any can. Cook on low for 3 hours.

Jane Ham, Rapid City

Easy Broccoli-Potato-Cheese Soup

- 4 cans cream of potato soup
- 4 soup cans milk
- 1 lb. Velveeta cheese, cut into small chunks
- 1 small head of broccoli, cut into florets
- Black pepper, to taste

Combine all ingredients in crockpot. Cook on low for 4 hours.

Lois Odien-Page, Hermosa

Chunky Chicken, Vegetable and Rosemary Stew

- 2 T. canola oil, divided
- 12 ounces boneless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 medium onion, cut in 8 wedges
- 3 medium carrots, quartered lengthwise and cut into thirds
- 1 medium celery stalk, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 cups water
- 2 dried bay leaves
- 1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 (15 oz.) can reduced-sodium navy beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup grape tomatoes, quartered
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 1 T. chopped fresh rosemary
- 3/4 tsp. salt

In Dutch oven, heat 1 T. canola oil over medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook about 3 minutes per side or until it begins to brown (center will still be slightly pink). Remove from oven and set aside. Add remaining canola oil, onion, carrot and celery. Sauté, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes or until vegetables just begin to lightly brown on edges. Add water, bay leaves and pepper flakes. Bring to boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium low and simmer covered for 20 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Stir in chicken, beans, tomatoes, Italian parsley, rosemary and salt. Cover and cook 5 minutes or until tomatoes are tender and chicken is cooked. Serve immediately or let stew stand 30 minutes to develop flavors and texture. Yields 6 1-cup servings.

Nutritional analysis per serving: 220 calories; 7 g total fat (1 g saturated fat); 50 mg cholesterol; 17 g carbohydrates; 6 g fiber; 3 g sugars; 22 g protein; 380 mg sodium; 532 mg potassium

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Chicken Taco Soup

- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 (16 oz.) can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (16 oz.) can pinto beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (16 oz.) can corn, drained or 1 can cream-style corn
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 1 can Rotel tomatoes and chilies
- 1/2 cup diced green pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 lb. cooked chicken, shredded
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1 pkg. taco seasoning

Place all ingredients in a crockpot. Cook on high for 2 hours or low for 4 hours. Can be garnished with sour cream and/or cheese once scooped into a bowl.

Colleen Noecker, Yankton

White Chicken Chili

- 5 to 6 (15 oz.) cans Northern beans, drained
- 3 (13 oz.) cans chunk chicken with juice, shredded
- 8 oz. can green chilies
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cheese soup (Fiesta or Cheddar) or 4 cups shredded cheese
- 16 oz. sour cream
- 1 pkg. white chicken chili seasoning

Combine all ingredients in crockpot. Cook until heated thru.

Jeanine Greenwood, Sioux Falls

Please send your favor ite bread/ breakfast and seafood recipes to your local electric coop erative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2016. All entries must include your name, mailing address, tele phone number and cooperative name.


SIoux VALLEY
ENERGY

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Savings in Luverne

CO-OP CONNECTIONS CARD

Those Blasted Things/Luverne Monuments



Those Blasted Things/Luverne Monuments, owned by Vance and Becky Walgrave, is a small family business that prides itself on excellent service, quality products and competitive prices. Those Blasted Things offers a unique shopping experience with rocks, meteorites, gems, fossils, beads, essential oils, jewelry, and much more! You'll learn a little about history and geology as you tour the store. Luverne Monuments offers beautiful memorials made out of #1 select granite and quartzite materials. They offer many colors and designs. You can count on personalized service in a private, caring manner. The businesses are located at 924 South Kniss Avenue—look for the big buffalo! You'll receive a 7% discount at Those Blasted Things and \$100 off memorials over \$1,000 when you shop with your Co-op Connections Card.

Salon 75 Hair Care and Body Retreat



Salon 75, owned and managed by Faye Bremer, is Luverne's premier hair salon and body retreat. The team at Salon 75 prides itself in making sure their customers get exactly the services they desire every visit in a relaxing environment. They offer a full line of hair care, spa services and pamper packages including nail esthetics, massage, reflexology, facials, spray tanning, and much more! The recently remodeled and expanded salon will truly give you a retreat experience! Let the friendly, professionally trained staff at Salon 75 pamper you from head to toe. It's definitely worth the drive—626 South Kniss Avenue. Use your Co-op Connections Card and save 10% on retail product purchases or get \$3 off a massage, manicure, or pedicure.

Rock County Eye Clinic



Time for that annual eye check? Visit Dr. Sandra Carman at the Rock County Eye Clinic for your full service eye care health needs. They offer a variety of frame styles to give you a fresh look for the new year. Use your Co-op Connections Card and save 30% off frames or 10% off an annual supply of contacts. Make your next appointment at Rock County Eye Clinic located at 102 North Freeman Avenue and let the professional and friendly staff assist you.

Welcome New Business – Sterlings Café and Grille



Sterlings Café and Grille, located at the heart of downtown Luverne at 105 East Main Street, is a new participating business with the Co-op Connections Card program. Take advantage of a 15% discount off your ticket (alcohol not included) with your card. Sterlings Café and Grille offers a casual fine dining experience and features steaks, pasta, seafood and much more! Enjoy their homemade breads and desserts along with their quality, fresh local produce. Owner Brian Sterling promises big city food, friendly service, and small town comfort.



Additional Savings in Luverne

During your next visit to Luverne, be sure to shop and save at the rest of the participating businesses for the Co-op Connections Card program:

Blue Mound Auto Glass

- 10% off glass for cash sales or a free aquapel glass treatment with insurance windshield replacement

Brandenburg Gallery

- 10% off regular priced in-stock photographs and merchandise

Busse Plumbing, Heating and A.C., Inc.

- 15% discount on pre-season furnace or air conditioner inspection

Culligan Water Conditioning

- \$100 off equipment installation

Health Styles-Weight Loss Center

- Complimentary initial consultation

Herb N Legend

- 10% off any regular priced purchase

Hallstrom Glass Studio & Art Gallery

- 10% off any custom stained glass

Hillcrest Motel

- 8% off room rates

Luverne Power Fitness

- \$10 off/month

Pizza Ranch

- 10% off buffet

Prairie Rock Honey Company

- 10% off

SVE Receives OSHA SHARP Award for Safety Excellence

Sioux Valley Energy's Brandon Service Center received a Federal Two-Year OSHA SHARP Award on October 30th through the SDSU Engineering Extension. The award recognizes small businesses that have used OSHA's on-site consultation program and have achieved an exemplary injury and loss time rate. The goal of the program is to promote the daily success of South Dakota employers in building stronger safety cultures and in providing safer work environments for their employees and the general public.

Sioux Valley Energy has 100 employees with 25 of them reporting out of the Brandon Service Center. Their Colman Service Center is currently in the Pre-SHARP status with the goal of achieving the SHARP award requirements in the near future. Terry Ebright, Safety Coordinator for the Cooperative, said, "Safety is of the utmost importance at Sioux Valley Energy, not only for those employees that are in higher risk and more dangerous jobs, but for all employees. I am very proud and honored that we received this award, but the credit for our successes and achievements goes to the employee group. Without the conscious efforts and dedication to safety by all employees, we could not achieve such an honor as this."



Electric Youth Tour

Inspiring Future Leaders for 50-plus Years

By
**Brenda Kleinjan
and
Magen Howard**

POSITIVE. INFLUENTIAL. LIFE-CHANGING.

All three words hold a host of meaning for students who have participated in the annual Rural Electric Youth Tour.

Since 1963, more than 1,200 South Dakota teens have made the trek to Washington, D.C., to learn about cooperatives, the nation's political process and about their peers from across the country.

"The trip that we took was extremely positive. It was a great influence for leadership," said Shanna (Hilderman) Stueve of Wheaton, Minn., who, as a teenager in 1996 represented West Central Electric

Cooperative in Murdo, S.D., on the trip.

"Basically the experience allowed me to see things that I wouldn't have necessarily been able to participate in. It showed me different leadership styles, not to mention all of the historical and incredibly interesting monuments that we are able to participate in," Stueve said.

"I was incredibly interested in politics. However, I did not end up following that career path," said Stueve who, along with her husband, has an insurance and seed business in western Minnesota where they are members of Traverse Electric Cooperative.





Left: Participants from the 1965 or 1966 Youth Tour walk with Sen. George McGovern, second from right, near the Capitol. Photo courtesy Steve Smeenk, Butte Electric Cooperative.

Opposite Page: The 2015 South Dakota Rural Electric Youth Tour delegation consisted of 44 teens.

“As a junior in high school, having the opportunity meet the politicians that represented me was very important to me. I feel like this is a trip of a lifetime!” she said. “Not only did I have the chance to see the different aspects of government, but I also had the opportunity to see the different socioeconomic backgrounds based on region from across the country. I feel like it’s a valuable exposure to culture.”

Rooted in politics

Youth Tour was born from a speech at the 1957 NRECA annual meeting by then-Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson. He was a longtime advocate of electric co-ops, having lobbied for the creation of Pedernales Electric Cooperative in 1937 as a young politician in Texas. “If one thing comes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents,” the future president said.

With that encouragement, Texas electric co-ops began sending summer interns to work in the senator’s Washington, D.C., office. In 1958, an electric co-op in Iowa sponsored the first group of 34 young people on a weeklong study tour of the nation’s capital. Later that same year, another busload came to Washington from Illinois. The idea grew, and other states sent busloads of students throughout the summer. By 1959, the Youth Tour had grown to 130 participants.

South Dakota sent its first delegation of 31 students representing 18 cooperatives in 1963. The following year, NRECA began to coordinate joint activities among the state delegations and suggested that co-op representatives from each state arrange to be in Washington, D.C., during Youth Tour week. The first year of the coordinated tour included about 400 teens from 12 states.

As word spread, the program grew – and grew and grew. Youth Day, generally on the Monday of Youth Tour, is when all the state contingents converge to learn about grassroots politics and hear from inspirational speakers. The students share their state pins, often vying to get the most pins or those that are rare, like those from Hawaii’s small group.

In 2015, South Dakota electric cooperatives sent 44 teens on the trip. It tied with the state’s 1965 delegation as the largest to represent the state. More than 1,700 students participated in the 2015 Youth Tour and the 2016 tour, scheduled for June 10-16, promises to be even bigger.

Inspiring our youth

For the past decade, students have heard the inspiring story of Paralympian Mike Schlappi, a star athlete who was paralyzed as a teen. State coordinators lobby for Schlappi to return year after year because, they say, the students never fail to take his story to heart.

Schlappi was their age when his whole life changed from an accidental gunshot. Today he makes the annual Youth Tour presentation a priority because he loves the kids

“They’re so young and trying to figure out their lives. They’ve heard enough speakers and read enough books, sometimes they’ll roll their eyes,” Schlappi said. “But they’re away from parents and excited about their future and maybe got their eyes on the cute kid across the room. They’re willing to make positive changes. Back home, they get labels, and they have to live up to that. [At Youth Tour], they can make new impressions on new friends.”

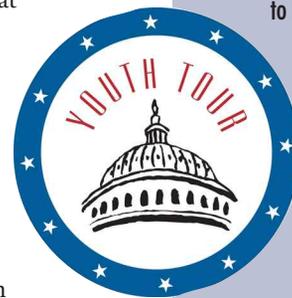
Were you there?

Did you or a family member go on Youth Tour? Let us know!

More than 1,200 South Dakota teens have participated in Youth Tour since 1963 and there are even more Minnesota and Nebraska teens who have gone through.

Sadly, in the past five decades, we’ve lost track of some of them. We’d love to hear from you and how the Youth Tour experience benefited you.

Contact your local electric cooperative or find us on Facebook.



Are you ready?

Do you know of an outstanding teen that would benefit from the Youth Tour experience? Cooperatives participating in the 2016 Youth Tour are taking applications for the program. To find out more about your cooperative’s participation and selection criteria, contact them. You’ll find their address in this magazine.

2016 SVE District Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, February 2

District 8- Location: Luverne, MN
- Blue Mound Meeting &
Banquet Center

Thursday, February 4

District 7- Location: Harford, SD -
West Central School

Monday, February 8

District 5- Location: Colton, SD -
Taopi Hall

Tuesday, February 9

District 6- Location: Brandon, SD
- Brandon Valley High School

Thursday, February 11

District 10- Location: Edgerton,
MN - Edgerton Public School

Thursday, March 3

District 9- Location: Pipestone, MN - Pipestone Area High School

****Monday, March 7**

District 2- Location: Volga, SD - Sioux Valley School

****Monday, March 14**

District 3- Location: Flandreau, SD - William J. Janklow Community Center

****Tuesday, March 15**

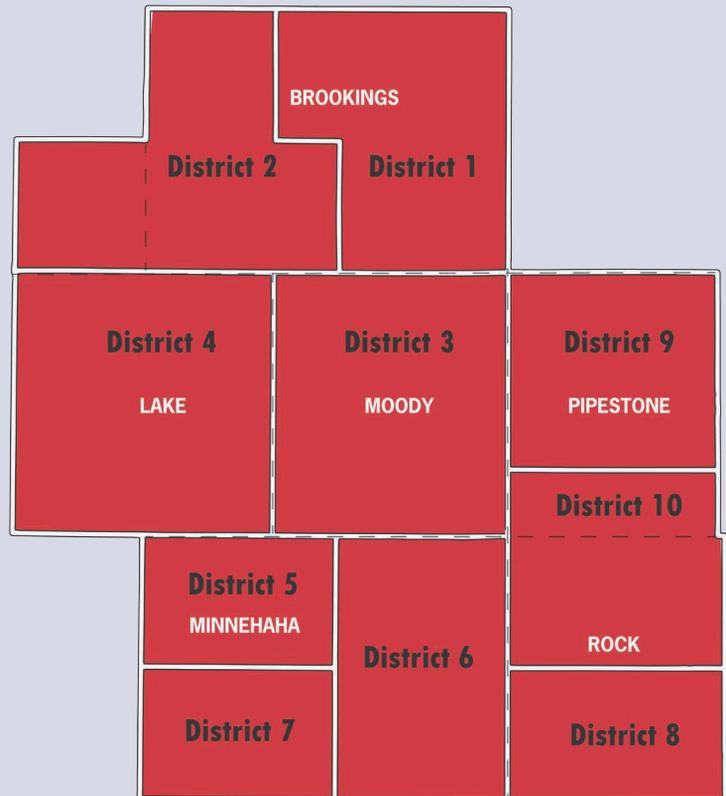
District 1- Location: White, SD - McKnight Hall

****Monday, March 21**

District 4- Location: Madison,
SD - Madison High School
Commons

****Denotes Election Meetings**

**A complimentary dinner will be served beginning at
5:30 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.**



Petition Deadlines for Election Meetings:

District 2: January 7
District 3: January 14
District 1: January 15
District 4: January 21



Seeking Nominations for 'Power and Hope' Award

Do you know a Sioux Valley Energy member who is making a difference in his/her community? If so, nominate that individual for the fourth annual 'Power and Hope' award. This award will recognize those who have been generous, selfless and giving—someone who helps others expecting nothing in return.

Finalists will be chosen from the cooperative's districts and recognized at their district meeting which will take place in February or March. Those finalists will then be recognized at the Cooperative's annual meeting in June. One finalist will be chosen for the grand prize -- a \$1,000 donation to the charity of their choice (must be a 501c3). All finalists will receive a \$100 donation to the charity of their choice as well.

Who is eligible to receive the Sioux Valley Energy Power and Hope Award?

Nominees must be at least 13 years old. They must be a customer of Sioux Valley Energy or live in the household of a Sioux Valley Energy customer. Groups and organizations are not eligible for the award. SVE employees, board members or their immediate family members are not eligible to receive the award.

What is the deadline for nominations?

The deadline for nominations is January 1, 2016.

Where do I find a nomination application?

You can fill out an online nomination application from our website (www.siouxvalleyenergy.com under the 'MyCommunity tab') or you can call 800-234-1960 and request a nomination form be sent to you.

Who can I contact for more information?

You can contact Carrie Law through email at carrie.law@siouxvalleyenergy.com or by phone at 800-234-1960.

\$12,000 In Scholarships To Be Given Away

Sioux Valley Energy is offering \$12,000 worth of scholarships to eligible graduating high school seniors or first time attendees at an institution of higher education. The application deadline is 4:30 p.m. on Friday, January 8, 2016.

Applications will be judged on the basis of grades, ACT or SAT test scores, work experience, school activities, volunteer community service and an essay question.

The majority of the scholarship funding comes from Operation Roundup® funds, with additional monies from Basin Electric Power Cooperative and L&O Power Cooperative.

To be eligible you must:

- Be a graduating high school senior or first-time attendee at an institution of higher education.
- Plan to be a full-time student in an accredited college or vocational-technical school this fall.
- Be a child of a Sioux Valley Energy customer.
- Have a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA.
- Provide a written recommendation from a teacher, administrator or counselor.
- One winner per family/per year.

Applications are available from your school counselor, from any Sioux Valley Energy service center (in Colman, Pipestone and Brandon), on the web at:

<http://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/myCommunity/Scholarship/index.html>



Teens' Big Ideas Take Shape

Young Entrepreneurs Plan for Success

TEENS ARMED WITH BUSINESS PLANS AND DREAMS descended on Aberdeen in early December to showcase their concepts and compete in the ninth annual BIG Idea Final Competition.

The Bent Perspective plan for an Origami intensive store brought top honors to Pierre student Haley Ketteler.

Ketteler outlined how her company would provide customers with an all paper experience, allowing clients to design paper arrangements for special events, take classes to learn Origami, purchase paper creations, kits and supplies and order custom creations. As part of the experience, she had to identify marketing opportunities, define her competition and outline management and opera-

tions for the business.

Eight high school finalists were selected from the 263 applications submitted from 37 different schools. First round judges included 114 volunteers from the region along with 132 college entrepreneurship and business students. Marketing designs were also submitted by 110 teams which included a logo and ad for their idea. Ellen Schlechter of Faulkton High School was recognized for her Calving Book App which was the The Marketing Design competition winner.

The eight finalists included Ketteler, second-place finishers George Bernard and Mark Wesolick of St. Thomas More High School in Rapid City, S.D., third-place finisher MaKayla Price of Wess-

By
Brenda Kleinjan





ington Springs High School; Dalton Larson, Jared Miller and Tyndall Petterson of West Central High School in Hartford, S.D.; Eli Gerry of Madison Central High School; Tony Baumann of Redfield High School; and two teams from St. Thomas More: Cierra Veldhuizen, Jenny Rooks and Olivia Facenda; and Brianna McGinnis, Maria Wilson and Sophie Wittenberg.

The competition encourages students to consider new ideas and opportunities for creating a business in their own region.

“We’re trying to get them to start thinking about starting a business, not necessarily starting the business, but what it would take to start and run a business,” said event organizer Kelly Weaver, regional director with the South Dakota Small Business Development Center in Aberdeen, S.D.

Participants were able to take part in panel discussions with the business owners, Weaver said. The competition is coordinated by the Small Business Development Center and funded by Sanford Health, East River Electric Power Cooperative, REED Fund, Dacotah Bank, Student Loan Finance Corporation, Aberdeen Development Corporation, Northwestern Energy, McQuillen Creative Group, The Tom and Danielle Aman Foundation, and Midcontinent Communications. Scholarships are provided by Northern State University and Presentation College. The competition is a result of the input and collaboration of these organizations along with: Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce, Aberdeen Downtown Association, Aberdeen Catholic School System – Roncalli High School, Aberdeen School District – Central High School and Dacotah Bank.

In addition to the schools listed above, students from the following high schools also participated: Aberdeen Central High School, Bridgewater-Emery High School, Bowdle High School, Canistota High School, Canton High School, Durprey High School, Edmund Central High School, Ethan High School, Eureka High School, Faith High School, Groton High School, Hitchcock Tulare High School, Hoven High School, Ipswich High School, Iroquois High School, Lead-Deadwood High School, Leola High School, Milbank High School, Mitchell High School, Montrose High School, Northwestern, Sioux Valley High School, Sioux Fall Christian, Swift Home School, Vermillion High School, Wagner High School, Warner High School, Watertown High School, Wilmot High School, and Yankton High School. A total of 414 students participated in a submission.

For her winning plan, Ketteler won \$1,000, while Bernard and Wesolick’s Caveman Custom Iron plan earned \$500 for second place and Price’s plan for KP Photography received \$250 for third place. Scholarships to both Northern State University and Presentation College were also awarded. Schlechter received \$500 for her marketing design plan.

Go to BIGIdeaSD.com for more information about the competition.

BIG Idea Finalists were, front row, from left: Cierra Veldhuizen, Maria Wilson, Haley Ketteler, Jenny Rooks, Brianna McGinnis and Sophie Wittenberg. Standing from left were: Olivia Facenda, George Bernard, Tony Baumann, Mark Wesolick, Eli Gerry, Tyndall Petterson, Dalton Larson, MaKayla Price, and Jared Miller. Photo by Dawn Sahli Photography

First Place: Bent Perspective

Bent Perspective is an Origami intensive store focused on teaching the customers how to make origami artwork. It will also offer services such as event decoration, custom origami artwork, pre-made origami artwork and kits. This business will provide the community with a unique and fun activity for all ages. It will help eliminate boredom in the community through a relaxing and fulfilling activity that all individuals can enjoy and appreciate.

Haley Ketteler, Pierre Riggs High School

Second Place: Caveman Custom Iron

Caveman Custom Iron will produce hand-crafted steel goods and distribute these goods to people who want unique pieces of functional art to decorate their home, garden, or place of business. Caveman Custom Iron will also produce tools such as knives or garden tools. Potential customers are those who look for pieces of iron work to decorate their home and people looking for quality, specialized tools for tasks such as woodworking and gardening.

George Bernard and Mark Wesolick, St. Thomas More High School

Third Place: KP Photography

KP Photography provides the talent of photography to the Wessington Springs area community. Photographers can take senior pictures, wedding pictures, engagement pictures, family pictures and more. It is very convenient for the community by being close and for a low cost.

MaKayla Price, Wessington Springs High School

Finalists:

The Cooler Backpack Company –
Cierra Veldhuizen, Jenny Rooks, Olivia Facenda,
St. Thomas More High School

The Spink County Outdoorsmen –
Tony Baumann, Redfield High School

All Seasons Lighting – Brianna McGinnis, Maria Wilson, Sophie Wittenberg, St. Thomas More High School

Gerry’s Pumpkins & Produce –
Eli Gerry, Madison Central High School

SoDak Custom Hay Co. – Dalton Larson, Jared Miller,
Tyndall Petterson, West Central High School

EmPOWER Youth Leadership

by Thea Richards, Hills-Beaver Creek High School
Advisory Committee Member, Chairperson of Journalism District

November is a month of change. It's an odd in-between month where the weather transitions from brisk to biting cold, and sweaters are gradually replaced by overstuffed coats. For students enrolled in the 2015-2016 EmPOWER Youth Leadership program, this November brought with it another great change. However, this change wasn't in the weather; it was in themselves.

On November 11, all 32 students that enrolled were invited to meet at the SVE Colman service center for the first group session of the year. They kicked off the day by getting to know each other through mixers and activities that challenged them to get outside their comfort zone and open up. After that, Melissa Johnson, owner of 'Oh My Cupcakes' in Sioux Falls, started the day with a powerful speech. She reminded students of their power to change lives, whether it be their life or the lives of people around them. Her inspiring words were the perfect way to start off the year. Next, students explored their different leadership strengths and weaknesses using the Gallup StrengthsFinder test. They learned to build on their abilities in order to use them in the best possible ways.

After a lunch consisting of custom pancakes, bacon, and other breakfast foods, the students were assigned to different "districts", each guided by a member of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee is made up of seven members from last year's EmPower group who were elected to help establish the next year of EmPower. Each district had a different aspect of the program that they would organize, whether it be food, journalism, volunteer work or social media. Using the cooperative model, a board member was then elected from each district to sit on the Soda Pop Co-op Board. Once that was completed, life coach Olympia Scott encouraged students to find their passion in life, ending the day on an inspirational note.

Change is inevitable. However, the students enrolled in EmPOWER now know they have the ability to influence that change. As the year progresses and the sessions dwindle, this amazing group of people will continue to grow as leaders and as individuals. I am so lucky and so blessed to include myself in this wonderful group. I can't wait to see what's in store for the future!



Katrina Burckhard, Colman-Egan, directs Jayden Pittmann, Baltic, on how to decorate his cupcake.



The 2015-2016 EmPOWER Youth Leadership students:



Baltic High School:

- Chantel Brende
- Jayden Pittmann

Brandon Valley High School:

- Victoria Braley
- Matt Eigenberg
- Brayden Harris
- Alexander Miller
- Lexis Sherron
- Alison Woodward

Brookings High School:

- Rachel Regalado

Chester High School:

- Ethan Geraets
- Marissa Hanley

Colman-Egan High School:

- Katrina Burckhard
- Carter Schmidt

Deubrook Area School:

- Jacob Arbeiter
- Jacob Koch

Flandreau High School:

- Amanda Haugen
- Sara Haugen
- Kathy Parsley
- MaKayla Welbig

Luverne High School:

- Alena Hilfers
- Ashton Krueger
- Samantha Ykema

Madison High School:

- Morgan Johnson

Sioux Valley High School:

- Hannah Osterberg
- Rachel Miller
- Zach Puetz

Tri-Valley High School:

- Morgan Blake
- Bridget Bossman
- Mary Dybedahl
- Kaci Hall
- Jacob Kasowski
- Brock Newman

West Central High School:

- Donovan Hohn

DesMarais “EmPOWERS” Community with GenerationOn Grant *by Sheila Gross*

Shantelle DesMarais, a senior at Pipestone Area School, took part in Sioux Valley Energy’s first EmPOWER Youth Leadership program last year. DesMarais embraced the new program and took on leadership roles that provided an opportunity to give back to her Pipestone, Minnesota community through a GenerationOn grant award of \$500. DesMarais received the grant from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Throughout the last year, DesMarais was elected to an advisory committee that enabled her to attend the Co-ops YES! Conference. While at that conference, she was elected to represent Minnesota on the Cooperative Network Youth Board. DesMarais attended the NRECA Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. where she was picked to serve on the NRECA Youth Leadership Council. During the youth tour, DesMarais learned about the GenerationOn grant program and decided to apply. Only one service grant was available for each state.

DesMarais shared, “Sioux Valley Energy has done a lot for southwest Minnesota and the surrounding area with their never ending support for the youth. I’d been participating in their EmPOWER Youth Leadership Program for the last year, so I knew that whatever my service project was, I wanted to be able to give back some of the joy I’ve gained to other kids just like me.” When DesMarais applied for the service grant, her goal was to promote healthy living and active lifestyles for families in the community. Her personal enjoyment of dance and exercise, along with her involvement with the Ewert Recreation Center, inspired her idea. The grant award was used to bring in two bouncy inflatables, including an obstacle course, into the recreation facility as a fun activity to convey her message

about healthy living and the benefits of exercise. Pipestone Active Living, an educational agency that links community members to resources to improve their quality of life, also partnered with DesMarais on this project. Staff from the Ewert Recreation Center and Pipestone Active Living helped set up the inflatables and Pepsi Company donated bottled water.

There were 108 kids and 50 adults from the community that attended the free event on November 19th. Brittany Heidebrink, owner of Kids-N-Kare Daycare, brought thirteen kids to bounce around. She said, “There needs to be more activities like this in the winter. I really appreciate an inside activity. It’s good that a kid that age [DesMarais], thinks about younger kids.” Stacy Claussen, Ewert Recreation Center Director, added, “The event was a great opportunity for us, the kids, and for Shantelle. We can show our support to the community with an event that makes more people aware of the recreation center.” She noted that several attendees had never been in the center before. “It was really fulfilling to see all the kids and families enjoying themselves,” remarked DesMarais.

Her role in empowering other youth continues as DesMarais serves on the Advisory Council for Sioux Valley Energy’s EmPOWER Youth Leadership Program. She helped recruit students and develop program materials for the 2015-2016 class. The success of Sioux Valley Energy’s new youth initiative is because of the outstanding leadership qualities of students like Shantelle DesMarais, who are already making a mark on the world and their communities.

For more information on Sioux Valley Energy’s EmPOWER Youth Leadership Program, contact Jennie Patrick at 800-234-1960.

Pictured: Left to Right--Shantelle DesMarais with her new friends, Kendyl Houselog, Aubrey Hartke, and Alike Houselog, who enjoyed a bouncing good time.



Regional Dateline

November 20-January 10
Winter Wonderland, Falls Park
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-275-6060

November 24-December 26
Christmas at the Capitol
8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Pierre, SD
605-773-3178

December 5-26
Deck Your Halls Holiday Art
Show and Sale, 10 a.m. to
5 p.m., Spearfish, SD
605-642-7973

December 15-March 31
South Dakota snowmobile
trails season, Lead, SD
605-584-3896

December 17-19
Strawbale Winery Twilight
Flights 2015, 5 to 10 p.m.
Renner, SD, 605-543-5071

December 20
Christmas Caroling at The
Abbey, 2 to 4 p.m., Marvin, SD
605-398-9200

December 25
Visitor Center Closed
Pipstone National
Monument, Pipestone, MN
507-825-5464 Ext: 214

January 1
Erik Apland and Shawn Cable
in Concert, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.
Community Center, Bruce, SD

January 1
Visitor Center Closed
Pipstone National
Monument, Pipestone, MN
507-825-5464 Ext: 214



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.

January 7-9
15th Annual Ice Fishing
Tournament, 10 a.m. to
11 p.m., Mobridge, SD
605-845-2500

January 10, 17, 24, 31
Foreign Film Festival
Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973
www.matthewsopera.com

January 12
37th Annual Ranchers
Workshop, Antelope
Multi-purpose Building
9 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. CST
Mission, SD, 605-259-3252 ext. 3

January 16
Bark Beetle Blues Crawl
4:30 to 9 p.m., Custer, SD
605-440-1405

January 18
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Fee Free Day, Pipestone
National Monument
Pipestone, MN
507-825-5464 Ext: 214

January 21-24
Snowmobile Rally
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

January 22-23
ISOC SnoCross Shootout, 12:45
to 8:30 p.m., Deadwood, SD
605-578-1876

January 23-24
Broadway Play Series Dirty
Dancing, Fine Arts Theatre
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
Rapid City, SD 1-800-468-6463

January 29-30
Mardi Gras Weekend
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

January 29-30
35th Annual Farm, Home
and Sport Show, Armory
Webster, SD, 605-345-4468
www.webstersd.com

January 29-February 7
Black Hills Stock Show &
Rodeo, Rapid City, SD
605-355-3861

Events of Special Note

January 5-7
Dakota Farm Show, Dakota
Dome, Vermillion, SD
507-437-7969

February 5-7
Winterfest of Wheels Indoor
Car Show, Convention Center
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-231-3100
www.winterfestofwheels.com

January 30
Central Valley Struttin'
Gobblers 11th Annual NWT
Banquet, Community Center
Humboldt, SD, 605-610-6896
or 605-941-4297

February 5-6
Living History Fair
Watertown, SD, 605-886-7335

February 9-13
Winter Farm Show, 9 a.m. to
4 p.m., Watertown, SD
605-886-5814

February 12
Strawbale Winery Valentine
Twilight Flights 2016
6 to 10 p.m., Renner, SD
605-543-5071

February 13-14
Presidents Day Weekend
Fee Free Day, Pipestone
National Monument
Pipestone, MN
507-825-5464 Ext: 214