

South Dakota Electric

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Cooperative Connections

MARCH 2016 VOL. 68 NO. 3



**Hops
Dreams
Director Brews
Up Hobby** P8-9



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South Dakota Electric Cooperative Connections

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Editorial

The Importance of Member Engagement



Ed Anderson
General Manager, South Dakota
Rural Electric Association

In 2012, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the premier trade association representing approximately 900 electric cooperatives in 47 states, released a report entitled, "*The Electric Cooperative Purpose – A Compass for the 21st Century*." The findings of the blue ribbon task force comprised of a dozen co-op leaders from across the country were that an electric cooperative's purpose is to, "Power communities and empower members to improve the quality of their lives."

South Dakota's electric cooperatives are members of NRECA and firmly believes that you, our members, need to be at the heart of everything we do. We are proud of the fact that we are different from investor-owned utilities (there are six that operate in South Dakota), where the primary purpose is to generate profit for their stockholders. Many of those stockholders don't live in the communities served by the utility. While our cooperatives must of course generate enough revenue to cover our costs, profit is not our primary motive. Serving you and your neighbors is our number one priority.

Our story is about ordinary people that banded together to improve the quality of life by providing electricity to our community when no one else would do it.

As the *Electric Cooperative Purpose* report noted, "Our story is about ordinary people that banded together to improve the quality of life by providing electricity to our community when no one else would do it." But that was decades ago. As we look to the future, we once

again need your active participation in determining the future of our cooperatives.

Cooperatives enjoy the support of people from all walks of life. We operate in every type of business from agriculture, housing, finance, health care, technology, small business, food and many more. Co-ops can be found in the most rural to the most urban areas.

South Dakota electric cooperatives welcome their members' input on what we can do to ensure we are meeting your needs. One of the most basic ways to voice your input is by attending your local cooperative annual meeting.

One thing you can absolutely count on from your locally owned electric co-op: we will never be moving to Mexico or China like you hear of so many other companies doing. We will always be local – right here and ready to serve our members.

Weathering a Winter Storm

When ice and heavy snow bring down limbs and power lines, safety is a consideration indoors and out. Make sure you know how to weather the storm.

When outside, stay away from downed power lines:

- A power line does not need to be sparking or arcing to be energized. Equipment near power lines can also be energized and dangerous.



- Lines that appear to be “dead” can become energized as crews work to restore power or sometimes from improper use of emergency generators. Assume all low and downed lines are energized and dangerous. If you see a downed or sagging line, contact your utility.

- Motorists should never drive over a downed line as snagging a line could pull down a pole or other equipment and cause other hazards.

- Be careful approaching intersections where traffic or crossing lights may be out.

- If you plan to use a generator, know how to operate it safely.

Before a winter storm, you should have supplies on hand and know how to stay warm:

- Always keep a battery-powered radio or TV, flashlights and a supply of fresh batteries. You should also have water, blankets and non-perishable food.

- When power goes out, it often comes back in spikes. This can damage electronics. Keep your electronics safe by unplugging them when the power goes out. Leave one lamp or switch on as a signal for when your power returns.

- To prevent water pipes from freezing, keep faucets turned on slightly so that water drips from the tap. Know how to shut off water valves case a pipe bursts.

- Never use a charcoal grill to cook or heat with inside the home. Burning charcoal gives off deadly carbon monoxide gas. Charcoal grills should only be used outdoors.

- If you live with a child or elderly person, you may need to take them somewhere with power so they can stay warm. If you are healthy enough to stay home safely, there are ways to stay warm: stay inside and dress warmly in layered clothing.

- Close off unneeded rooms.

- When using an alternate heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards and be sure to properly ventilate.

Source: esfi.org

Free Course for Teachers

Teachers from elementary and secondary teachers in Minnesota, Montana, South Dakota and North Dakota are eligible for the 2016 Lignite Education Seminar.



The seminar was totally revamped in 2009 and made into a two-credit class which lasts for four days. Participants can receive credit from the University of North Dakota (economics), North Dakota State University (education) or Minot State University (science). This means that teachers who took the class when it was a one-credit course, can take it again if they need a refresher as there is lots of new information.

The seminar, which will be held at Bismarck State College, Bismarck, N.D., will provide teachers with the information and educational materials they need to teach their students about how lignite is mined and used to produce electricity for homes, farms and businesses in the Upper Midwest. In addition, the seminar covers lignite's economic impact on the region, as well as important environmental issues affecting the lignite industry.

During the seminar, teachers hear presentations by educators, researchers and lignite industry representatives. One day is devoted to touring mining operations, reclamation sites and coal conversion facilities.

Free lodging is provided in a Bismarck State College dormitory (two people per room). Meals will be provided. Also, transportation will be provided by the Lignite Energy Council for the tour of a mine, power plant and the Great Plains Synfuels Plant.

Kids' Corner Safety Poster

"The best way is the safe way."



Merick Olson, 10 years old
Merick is the son of Steve and Maricel Olson, Sinai, S.D. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, 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.

Savory Seafood



South Dakota Walleye

1/3 cup melted butter
2 cups soft white bread crumbs
1/4 tsp. salt
12 oz. walleye fillets
Dash of pepper
1 T. sesame seeds

Lightly grease bottom of casserole. Combine butter, bread crumbs and salt. Arrange fish in casserole. Lightly sprinkle with pepper. Top with bread crumb mixture. Sprinkle sesame seeds over all. Bake, uncovered, at 350°F. for 30 to 35 minutes.

Becky Walth, Glenham

Shrimp Boil

Cheap beer, enough to cover the shrimp by 2 inches
1 T. celery seed
1 T. cumin seed
1 T. caraway seed
1 T. poppy seed
Several lbs. large peel and eat shrimp
Melted butter, enough for each diner

In a deep soup pot, bring beer and seasonings to a boil. Be sure the seeds have swollen. It is important to allow the seeds to swell in size as this allows the flavor to develop. Add shrimp and boil together for 5 to 10 minutes to insure the shrimp are cooked. Be careful to prevent the pot from boiling over. (You can reuse this liquid to cook more shrimp.) At the end of the time, scoop enough shrimp from the pot for each diner to begin. Don't rinse them off. Peel and dip into melted butter. Note: Don't worry about manners and dining – put newspapers on the tabletop, have plenty of paper towels, peel the shrimp and throw the shells onto the newspaper. When dinner's over, simply remove the place settings, roll up the papers and throw in the trash. Of course, wash your hands before you pet your friendly feline!

Anda Johnson, Spearfish

Fish Tacos

1/2 cup sour cream
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
1 lb. white fish fillets
2 T. lemon juice
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1 pkg. taco seasoning, divided
2 T. vegetable oil
Taco shells or 8-inch soft flour tortillas
Topping: shredded cabbage, chopped tomato, lime juice, chopped cilantro, Mexican shredded cheese and taco sauce

Combine sour cream, mayonnaise, cilantro and 2 T. taco seasoning in bowl. Combine fish, vegetable oil, lemon juice and remaining taco seasoning in bowl; pour into skillet. Cook over medium heat for 4 to 5 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with fork. Fill soft or hard shells with fish mixture. Service with sour cream mixture and various toppings.

Mary Jessen, Holabird

Alaska Salmon Cakes with Yogurt Dill

1 egg
1/4 cup small-curd nonfat cottage cheese
1 T. chopped fresh dill or 1 tsp. dried dill weed
1 tsp. lemon pepper seasoning
1/4 cup sliced green onions
1 (14.75 oz.) can traditional pack Alaska salmon or 2 cans or pouches (6 to 7.1 oz. each) skinless, boneless salmon, drained and chunked
3 T. garlic-and-herb bread crumbs
Vegetable oil
Yogurt Dill Sauce
1/2 cup nonfat yogurt
1-1/2 tsp. finely minced fresh garlic
Salt and pepper
1 T. chopped fresh dill or 1 tsp. dried dill weed
1/4 cup grated cucumber (squeeze dry)

In medium bowl, whisk egg lightly. Add cottage cheese, dill, lemon pepper and green onions; mix well. Mix in drained salmon, then sprinkle in bread crumbs and mix well. Shape mixture into 4 patties, 1/2- to 3/4-inch thick and 3 inches in diameter. Heat nonstick skillet over medium-high heat and brush skillet with oil. Fry salmon cakes for about 2-1/2 to 3 minutes per side. Cakes should be crisp and golden on the outside and still moist on the inside. Serve with Yogurt Dill Sauce. To make yogurt and dill sauce, mix yogurt and garlic, adding salt and pepper to taste. Stir in dill and cucumber. Refrigerate, covered, until ready to serve. Makes 4 servings.

Nutritional information per serving: 217 calories (34% from fat), 8 g total fat, 2 g saturated fat, 112 mg cholesterol, 27 g protein, 8 g carbohydrate, 0.5 g fiber, 897 mg sodium, 320 mg calcium and 1800 mg omega-3 fatty acids

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Salmon Loaf

1 can pink salmon, drained and mashed
1 cup cracker crumbs
1 cup milk
2 eggs, beaten
4 T. butter, melted

Mix together all ingredients; place in a greased 1-1/2-quart casserole. Bake at 350°F., uncovered, for 1 hour.

Roxy Cook, Bruce

Fish and Cheese Chowder

1 lb. fish fillets, cut into 1-inch cubes
2 T. butter
6 T. chopped onion
1 cup chopped carrots
6 T. chopped celery
1/4 cup flour
2 (10 oz.) cans chicken broth
1/2 tsp. salt
Dash of paprika
3 cups milk
1 cup grated cheese

Melt butter in saucepan. Add onion, carrots and celery. Cook until carrots and onion are soft. Blend in flour using a bit of the broth so it doesn't get lumpy. Add salt and paprika. Cook 1 minute, stirring constantly. Gradually add chicken broth and milk. Cook until thickened. Add fish; simmer 10 minutes. Add cheese.

Jane Ham, Rapid City

Please send your favorite appetizer, beverage, casserole and dairy recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2016. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Ensuring High Quality Energy Efficiency Work



Patrick Keegan
Collaborative Efficiency

Dear Pat: I want to make my home more energy efficient, but some of the work needed is more than I can do by myself. When I'm hiring contractors to do these projects, how can I be sure that the work is of good quality?
– Jerry C.

Dear Jerry: The good news is there are many contractors performing high-quality energy efficiency

work. You're smart to first figure out what you can do to ensure your contractors deliver the kind of quality you're paying for.

The best quality assurance solution for most homeowners is to start with a home energy audit by a qualified and experienced energy auditor. Ask the auditor to specify the products and the quality standards for each recommended efficiency measure. The auditor can also help you by agreeing to inspect the finished work.

Using an auditor throughout your home energy upgrade will cost several hundred dollars, but it can pay off in a number of ways: you will know what work is truly needed and you can prevent poor quality or incomplete work. Your electric co-op may offer a free or discounted audit by one of its energy advisors or it may have a list of trusted energy auditors in the area. In some areas, there are home performance contractors experienced in whole home energy efficiency upgrades who can perform the energy audit themselves and then complete the work.

Once you have a clear idea and a description of the work that needs to be done, you'll need to identify contractors. Some co-ops offer financial incentives and know of contractors who have experience or training with energy efficiency.

The energy auditor can help you with questions to ask potential contractors.

- Is the contractor licensed and insured in your state? Do they have any additional training? For example, the Building Performance Institute (BPI) certifies contractors who have training in whole home energy efficiency improvements.

- For heating and cooling projects, how will the contractor decide what size equipment is needed in your home? Will they inspect duct work and insulation throughout the home?

- For insulation and weatherization upgrades, what is your insulation level now? What should it be? Will the contractor find and seal any air leaks before installing the insulation?

- For all projects, who will actually be at your home doing the work – the person you are talking to? An installer employed by the same company? Or a sub-contractor?

Make sure to do plenty of research before fully engaging a contractor:

- Don't take the first offer: Try to get at least two bids. The lowest quote might not necessarily be the best. Sometimes it's hard to compare bids unless they are itemized correctly. If one quote is significantly lower than others, inquire closely about the reasons for the difference.

- Check their work: Ask for and check references, read online reviews and ask your local experts about any experience they have with the contractor.

Once you have chosen a contractor, make sure you and the contractor agree on the written description of the work to be performed, the expected timeframe for completion and the price. If the contractor insists on providing an estimate rather than a firm bid, you should discuss what might cause the final bill to be higher than quoted. Some common areas of tension between contractors and their customers are also worth discussing:

- How often and when will the contractor communicate with you about the status of the project?

- How clean does the work area need to be at the end of each day?

- What is the daily work schedule?

It's best not to pay the contractor until work is completed and inspected. You and the energy auditor should both inspect the work. Your co-op's energy advisor may also be able to inspect or give you advice for what to look for. For example, is the window flashing installed correctly? Are the ducts sealed properly?

Finally, if you have a good experience with a contractor, pass the information along to friends and neighbors or write a helpful review – a good home contractor can be hard to find!



Your co-op's energy advisor can help inspect completed work.

This column was co-written by Patrick Keegan and Amy Wheelless of Collaborative Efficiency. Patrick Keegan writes on energy efficiency 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 File Suit In U.S. Supreme Court

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) joined utilities and 29 states and state agencies in petitioning the U.S. Supreme Court to halt implementation of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Power Plan. In late January, the D.C. Circuit denied multiple requests to stay the rule, which already is inflicting harm on electric co-ops.

"EPA itself predicts the closure or curtailment — this year — of many coal-fired power plants that would remain online absent the rule," said NRECA Interim CEO Jeffrey Connor. "If that doesn't meet the judicial criteria for 'immediate and irreparable harm' required to trigger a stay, what does?"

NRECA and other petitioners said that for each power plant retired or curtailed, co-ops and other utilities must carefully plan and implement changes to the electric system to replace the lost generation — requiring a very significant outlay of expenses over the next few years. This will lead to lost jobs, economic harm to rural communities and unrecoverable costs where power plants are shut down before the end of their remaining useful life.

"As not-for-profits serving 93 percent of America's persistent poverty counties, electric co-ops are especially concerned about the significant electric rate increases this would impose on some of our nation's most vulnerable citizens — families living on fixed incomes or in poverty," said Connor.

A \$5 billion price tag for one co-op

As an example, petitioners pointed to Basin Electric Power Cooperative, a not-for-profit regional wholesale electric generation and transmission cooperative that owns and/or operates 13 electric generating units in four western states that will be directly impacted by the rule.

Unless the court stays the rule and extends compliance dates, Basin Electric estimates it will have to spend about \$330 million just in the next two years in costs attributed solely to complying with the rule. The co-op's total compliance costs are projected to reach \$5 billion.

NRECA has estimated that total compliance costs for electric cooperatives could reach as high as \$28 billion over the 2022-2030 compliance period.

S.D. Leadership Class Seeks Participants From Ag Industry

Farmers, ranchers and agri-business people looking to become stronger leaders and advocates for agriculture are encouraged to apply for the next South Dakota Ag & Rural Leadership (SDARL) class.

"Men and women interested in taking leadership roles in agriculture or rural communities are encouraged to apply," said Lori Cope, executive director of SDARL. "SDARL is about developing leadership for rural communities, as well as for agriculture. Our goal is to get people involved in the decision-making processes that will affect positive change for their communities."

The deadline to apply for SDARL Class IX is March 15. Applications and more information are available online at www.sdarl.org. Applicants will interview in April and the class members will be announced in May. The program begins in November 2016.

The program is about a two-year commitment designed to include 10 in-state seminars, one National Study/Travel Seminar to Washington, D.C., and an International Study Travel Seminar in the spring of 2018. The program is designed for farmer/ rancher producers and agri-business individuals wanting to elevate their leadership knowledge, voice and vision for South Dakota. Participants must be a resident of South Dakota and between the ages of 25-55. Approximately 30 South Dakotans will make up SDARL Class IX.

Past program participants include agricultural producers, bankers, non-profit professionals, economic developers and others who work in ag-allied industries. Program alumni have gone on to serve in state and local government, as well as national and international leadership positions.

Currently in its 16th year, the South Dakota Livestock Foundation developed the SDARL program as a tool to develop more leaders for the state's most important industry.

SDARL is a non-profit organization dedicated to identifying and developing leadership for agriculture and rural communities in order to enhance the quality of life for all South Dakotans.

To apply, go to www.sdarl.org.

Minnesota Ag Leadership Seeks Participants

The Minnesota Ag and Rural Leadership (MARL) Program is also seeking applicants for its next class.

MARL is a dynamic two-year educational experience featuring nine three-day in-state seminars, a six-day national study seminar and a 10- to 14-day international study seminar. Each class consists of approximately 30 persons and is selected in the spring of even numbered years with the first seminar scheduled for November of that year.

Applications for the next class will be available until May 2016. Class IX members will interview late May/early June 2016 with class selection being announced by late June 2016.

The first seminar will be held in Willmar in November 2016.

For more information, go to: <http://www.marlprogram.org/application/>



The SDARL Class VIII posed for a photo during its January 2015 visit to the South Dakota Capitol.

Hops Dreams

Director's 25-year Hobby Grows Gallons at a Time

By
Brenda Kleinjan

ATTENDING A CONVENTION IN LINCOLN, NEB., 25 years ago gave Clay-Union Electric Corporation director Terry Munter a sip of a hobby to come.

While in Lincoln, he found a dark beer on tap at a time when dark beer was hard to find. Down the street was a store selling home brewing kits and the chemistry clicked for the former industrial arts teacher.

"I bought the materials and made my first batch," Munter recalled, and then continued with a slight grimace. "It was less than desirable."

He persisted on and after four or five batches got

one that wasn't too bad, he said.

Now, a quarter-century later, the Vermillion, S.D., man continues to tweak recipes as he seeks a combination of three, consistent base beers (a red a light and a dark) that he hopes will become the foundation for a brewing license and eventual bar that he envisions with brewing partner Lars Aga. And, add to that plan is the desire to form a cooperative for area hops growers. (The flowers – also called seed cones or strobiles – of the hops plant gives beer its flavoring.)

Munter describes the beer making process as a





Left: Lars Aga and Terry Munter look at hops flowers left after the harvest on Aga's Clay County farm. **Below:** A wipe board in Munter's brewing area reads like a chemistry teacher's chalk board, with notations made about different batches of beer. **Inset:** Hops give beer its flavor. Here, Munter shows commercially-purchased hops. **Opposite Page:** Munter's hobby has grown from a single pot on his kitchen stove to a series of boilers in a space mostly dedicated to his hobby.

simple one – but with many variations. One takes water, grain (typically barley), hops and yeast, apply heat and then cooling.

Munter's hobby has evolved from those first batches made on the kitchen stove to larger batches made in a space dedicated to the process (and laundry).

The kitchen stove has been replaced with digitally-controlled electric boilers, calibration instruments, plate chillers and other equipment gathered in his quest to consistently produce a good brew.

Munter believes the key lies in the water.

"It's ALL about the water," said Munter.

To make five gallons of beer, Munter starts with 6.5 gallons of water and then adds the grains. Through a process of sparging (washing) and mashing, the raw beer – or wort – is formed and then brought to the electric boil kettle where the hops are added for flavor. Hops added early in the process dictates the taste of the beer while hops added later gives the beer its aroma.

When the mash tun is processed, it is heated at 150 to 155 degrees.

But one degree is critical, Munter notes.

"Every beer style has a different mash temperature," Munter said

For Munter, it comes back to the water.

"The pH is very important," said Munter, noting that a good beer will have a pH of 5.2 to 5.4.

The difficulty for Munter is that his local rural water starts at a pH of 7.2, which while good for many things, is not good for Munter's quest of a good glass of beer.

Munter's solution to his water dilemma? He builds his own.

"We start with pure water," Munter said. He takes local water through reverse osmosis and mixes with other sourced water to develop the characteristics he has found will develop good beer. (It

comes in handy that his son is a biochemist in water engineering.)

"Water is the secret and then consistency. If I could make any wish, it would be consistency," Munter said.

Once the beer has boiled and then cooled through a plate chiller, it begins its fermenting process. Munter adds yeast which starts eating the wort's starches. Munter will take measurements of the wort with a refractometer to determine the mixture's specific gravity. His goal is to have an alcohol content of 7.2 percent to 7.5 percent, depending on the type of beer being made.

The primary fermenting process takes nine to 12 days and then the brew continues to a secondary fermenter.

The beer is then kegged and stays under pressure for 15 days. His beers have a shelf life of one month to 2.5 years, depending on the type.

While Munter and Aga have been using purchased hops in their beers (and experimenting with hops grown on a couple of plants in Munter's back yard), they have hopes of incorporating locally-grown hops grown on Aga's farm west of Vermillion. He has begun a trellis system to support 410 hops plants, which, when mature, could produce more than 2,400 pounds of hops in a good year.

Once established, the harvesting of the hops will be a growing issue.

Aga's 410 plants are still immature, but in their first season it took four days to harvest the plants by hand. That time will increase once the plants reach maturity.

Mechanical harvesting equipment is cost-prohibitive for an individual producer, but Munter and Aga have hopes of forming a cooperative of hops growers for the purchase and use of the equipment.



74th Annual Meeting Held

SDREA held its 74th annual meeting Jan. 14 and 15 in Pierre with about 300 co-op directors and employees attending. On Thursday afternoon, participants heard presentations by CoBank and Federated, participated in a demonstration of the revamped SDREA storm map and attended a legislative update with SDREA lead lobbyist Darla Rogers. There was strong turnout among legislators and other elected officials at Thursday night's Legislative Dinner, with an estimated 430 people attending. Friday presentations included an update on national politics and the impact of the EPA's Clean Power Plan (CPP) on South Dakota. During his CPP presentation, Basin Electric's Steve Tomac previewed a new video using a car analogy. That video can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4y8cGrXDwE&feature=youtu.be&a CFC's Sheldon Peterson closed out the morning session and Sen. Mike Rounds addressed the group during the luncheon. Throughout the meeting, numerous South Dakotans were recognized for their dedication to the electric cooperative program in the state. Descriptions of these awards are at the end of this bulletin.

During the board reorganization, SDREA's board re-elected its officer team: President Don Heeren (Southeastern Electric), Vice President John Long (Grand Electric), Secretary Bill Bielmaier (West River Electric) and Treasurer D.J. Mertens (West Central Electric.)

Legacy of Leadership Awards Presented

Three men were recognized Friday at the South Dakota Rural Electric Association's annual meeting Jan. 15 in Pierre, S.D., for their contributions to electric cooperatives in South Dakota and the nation. **Alden Flakoll** of McPherson County, S.D., **Scott Parsley** of Madison, S.D., and **Jim Ryken** of Gayville, S.D., were each presented the SDREA Legacy of Leadership Award. The award recognizes co-op leaders whose talents, dedication and commitment to their co-op, their communities and the larger co-op family stand out among many. This is the third year the award has been presented.

The 2016 SDREA Legacy of Leadership Award recipients are, from left, James Ryken, Alden Flakoll, and Scott Parsley.

Alden Flakoll served on the board of directors for FEM Electric Association in Ipswich, S.D., from 1977 to 2014. He helped the co-op venture into several subsidiaries while working to keep electric rates affordable. He served nearly 20 years on the East River Electric board and also six years on the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation board. While on the boards, he worked to achieve both his Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership Credential certificates. Scott Parsley stepped down in January from his 30-year career with East River Electric Power Cooperative but will continue to serve the state in his capacity as a member of the South Dakota State Senate. During his tenure at East River Electric, he was involved with the creation of the American Coalition for Ethanol, the Rural Electric Economic Development Fund and the creation of Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives – the brand of America's electric co-op. He also served on the board of the Consumer Federation of America and lobbied at the state level in both South Dakota and Minnesota and also nationally. Locally, Scott has been involved with his local church, Lutheran Outdoors, helped create a Habitat for Humanity Chapter in the Madison area (and has traveled internationally with the organization).

James Ryken joined the board of directors of Clay-Union Electric Corporation in Vermillion, S.D. in March 1989 and has held every local board office and currently serves as assistant secretary. Ryken has represented Clay-Union on the East River Electric board of directors for the past 17 years, including eight as the organization's secretary and the past seven as board president. Since 2008, Ryken has also served on the Mid-West Electric Consumers Association board. In his tenure as president of the East River Electric board, Ryken has guided the cooperative through the hiring of a new general manager and also the cooperative's role as a transmission owner in the Southwest Power Pool. Watch the presentation video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVdupDFj1T0&feature=em-upload_owner



Director Training Recognized

Thirty cooperative directors were recognized for achieving the top level of training offered by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. NRECA's Director Certificate Programs are specifically designed to help electric cooperative directors, at every stage of their service, understand their roles and responsibilities, stay up-to-date on the key issues and trends in the industry and prepare them to meet the challenges facing electric cooperatives now and in the future. They are offered in three parts, taken in progression from fundamental to advanced. The Director Gold Program recognizes directors who have earned their Credentialed Cooperative Director training and Board Leadership Course credentials and are committed to continuing their education.

The 30 directors recognized for achieving Director Gold level were: Black Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc. — Alvin Perry; Central Electric Cooperative — Bernetta Burghardt, Mark Hofer, Darwin Morrison and Duane Wolbrink; Cherry-Todd Electric Co-op, Inc. — Arthur Reagle; Dakota Energy Cooperative, Inc. — David Allen, Garry Dearborn, Robert Duxbury, Jeffrey Madison, Gene Marone, Bruce Micheel and Dennis Ruzicka; Douglas Electric Cooperative, Inc. — Joel Baier; FEM Electric Association, Inc. — Gary Bachman and Frank Heinz; H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. — Bert Rogness and Dale Williams; Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, Inc. — Beverly Birkeland, Robert Keckler, Paul Lawrence

Congratulations!



and Royce Walker; Sioux Valley Energy — Bruce Martinson; Southeastern Electric Cooperative, Inc. — Don Heeren and John Ostraat; West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. — Joseph Leutenegger and Charles Oller; and West River Electric Association, Inc. — Marcia Arneson, William Bielmaier and Larry Eisenbraun.

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100% Board and Management

Black Hills Electric Cooperative, Custer, 100% CENTURY CLUB
Bon Homme Yankton Electric Association, Tabor

100% Board CENTURY CLUB, 100% Employee Participation

Butte Electric Cooperative, Newell

Cam Wal Electric Cooperative, Selby

Central Electric Cooperative, Mitchell, 100% CENTURY CLUB

Charles Mix Electric Association, Lake Andes

100% Employee Participation, all at CENTURY CLUB

Clay Union Electric Corporation, Vermillion, 100% Board CENTURY CLUB

Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative, Watertown

Dakota Energy Cooperative, Huron

100% Management CENTURY CLUB, 100% Employee Participation

East River Electric Power Cooperative, Madison, 100% CENTURY CLUB

FEM Electric Association, Ipswich, 100% Board PRESIDENTIAL LEVEL,

100% Management CENTURY CLUB, 100% Employee Participation

Grand Electric Cooperative, Bison

H-D Electric Cooperative, Clear Lake, 100% CENTURY CLUB

Lake Region Electric Association, Webster

Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, Timber Lake

100% Employee Participation

Oahe Electric Cooperative, Blunt

Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative, Rapid City

Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, 100% Management CENTURY CLUB

Southeastern Electric Cooperative, Marion, 100% Employee Participation

South Dakota Rural Electric Association, Pierre

100% Management CENTURY CLUB, 100% Employee Participation

Union County Electric Cooperative, Elk Point

West Central Electric Cooperative, Murdo

100% Management CENTURY CLUB, 100% Employee Participation

West River Electric Association, Wall, 100% CENTURY CLUB

Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative, Milbank

100% CENTURY CLUB, 100% Employee Participation

100% Board

Cherry-Todd Electric Cooperative, Mission

Douglas Electric Cooperative, Armour

100% Management

Lacreek Electric Association, Martin

Northern Electric Cooperative, Bath



Safety Recognized

Seven cooperatives were recognized for their 2015 safety accomplishments during the SDREA annual meeting. Bon Homme Yankton Electric in Tabor; Butte Electric in Newell; East River Electric in Madison; Grand Electric in Bison; H-D Electric in Clear Lake; Sioux Valley Energy in Colman; and West Central Electric in Murdo, each completed its three-year enhanced assessment process in 2015.

Years of Service Recognition

Fifty-two cooperative directors and employees were recognized for 25 or more years of service to the state's electric cooperatives. Those recognized, along with their years of service and the cooperative they are affiliated with, include:

25 years: Bill Brisk, Black Hills Electric; Merlin Goehring, Bon Homme Yankton Electric; Kim Wince, Butte Electric; Dwight Keegel, Central Electric; Bernadette Reagle and Robin Schmitz, Cherry-Todd Electric; Gary Eidem, Clay-Union Electric; Tim Goetz, Dakota Energy; Liz Avery, Tim Dockendorf and Brad Ebdrup, East River Electric; Todd Sprang, H-D Electric; Ellis Rae Hicks, Lacreek Electric; Tyler Marken, Northern Electric; Paul Anderson and Loren Halgerson, Sioux Valley Energy; Curt Anderson and Todd Nelson, Southeastern Electric; and Koozie Johnson, West River Electric. **30 years:** Doug Schley and Ken Schlimgen, Central Electric; Randy Borer, Cherry-Todd Electric; Brad Brodersen, Clay-Union Electric; Scott Seitz, East River Electric; Rob Vetch, FEM Electric; Mark Fischer, Northern Electric; Vic Simmons, Rushmore Electric; Joan Wangberg, Sioux Valley Energy; Richard Dailey, Union County Electric; Joe Leutenegger, West Central Electric; and Steve Ahles, Gail Barlund and Gene Sass, Whetstone Valley Electric. **35 years:** Rhonda Page, Butte Electric; Walt Lurz, Cherry-Todd Electric; Bob Johnson, Verdon Lamb and Dave Zaug, Codington-Clark Electric; Randy Grant and Dave Piehl, East River Electric; Rayford Anderson, Grand Electric; Brad Becker, Northern Electric; Gerri Lucas, Rushmore Electric; John McDonald, Bill Rotert and Tom Zingler, Southeastern Electric; Steve Lewis and Ralph Morse, Union County Electric; and Dennis Zirpel, West Central Electric. **40 years:** Terry Keller, Cam Wal Electric; and Dan Krueger, Rosebud Electric. **50 years:** Pat Palmer, Grand Electric.

Electric Co-op Day

Energizing the Grassroots

By
Brenda Kleinjan

ENGAGING IN THE POLITICAL ARENA AND MAKING their members' voices heard has been part of the electric cooperative DNA since their emergence 80 years ago.

Those early co-op leaders waged hard-fought battles in state legislatures to create electric cooperatives. They also recognized that working together, their voices carried more weight than any one did alone.

In the years since, electric cooperatives still work to make sure the voices of more than 335,000 South Dakotans who receive power from an electric cooperative are heard.



For the past four years, electric cooperatives in South Dakota have hosted Electric Co-op Day at the Capitol as a way to bring co-op leaders to Pierre to participate in the legislative process.

The day is designed to help educate and connect. Some years, there are specific pieces of legislation that co-ops are advocating for. Other years, it's simply an opportunity to observe and be present.

During the day, electric cooperative directors, employees and members attend committee hearings, speak with their elected officials and watch the legislature in action. There's time spent observing, time spent learning





Left: The South Dakota Senate welcomed the state's electric cooperatives to the chamber during the 2015 Legislative Session. Groups are regularly recognized this way. **Below:** Electric cooperative directors and employees observe the S.D. Senate from the Senate Gallery during the 2015 Co-op Day at the Capitol. **Below left:** H-D Electric director Steve Hansen is ready to put barbecue sauce on Rep. Lee Qualm's pork sandwich. **Opposite Page:** Participants of the 2015 Co-op Day at the Capitol pose for a photo with Sen. Scott Parsley and Rep. Tom Brunner. Weather had some participants leaving early and not waiting for the photo.



and time spent conversing.

For many co-op employees and directors, it's an eye-opening experience. Observing a bill on its journey through committee hearings, and floor debates can sometimes be baffling. Throughout the day, the process becomes less intimidating.

By design, Electric Cooperative Day at the Capitol is held toward the end of the legislative session. The 2016 event is Feb. 23, the 26th of the 91st Legislative Session's 38 days. This year, it is the day before "Crossover Day" the day which bills must emerge from the body where they originated. (In South Dakota, bills are introduced either on the House side or the Senate side. They are considered by committees in the originating body, and, if successful, proceed to that body's full chamber. After floor debate, the bill can be sent to the other side to be considered. If it fails to leave the chamber it started in, it is essentially done.)

Electric cooperatives hold Electric Co-op Day toward the end of session for a variety of reasons. One, other groups who have similar functions throughout the session are typically held at the beginning of session. Two, Electric Co-op Day is an opportunity for co-ops to say thank you to the legislature by hosting a noon meal under the capitol dome.

Want to learn more about South Dakota's Legislative Process? Go to <http://legis.sd.gov/>

Minnesota Legislature

Directors' Day at the Capitol

During the Minnesota Rural Electric Association annual meeting March 21-23, cooperative board directors and managers spend a day at the Minnesota Capitol discussing electric generation, transmission and delivery policy issues with legislators. The directors and managers serve as the frontline for explaining the cooperative position on recently introduced bills being discussed at the Capitol and how they impact electric rates and reliability for rural member-owners.

Grassroots Day at the Capitol

Each legislative session, MREA member distribution cooperatives select delegates from among their employees, directors, member-owners, key account customers and others to meet with state legislators at the Minnesota Capitol. The event is timed to coincide with final committee debates on electricity proposals.

Grassroots advocates share professional and personal expertise on bills that have a critical impact on the day-to-day operations of the cooperatives and the quality and affordability of electricity to the member-owner. The day motivates and engages grassroots advocates in electric issues and strengthens relationships with legislators.



Electricity is the Best Choice

for cost-savings and the environment

By Paul Wesslund

Analysis says that national policy and everyday conventional wisdom miss the mark on the benefits of electricity.

KEITH DENNIS SAYS ELECTRICITY IS A GOOD ENERGY choice for the environment. He cites a thought-provoking list of reasons in his peer-reviewed article published in *The Electricity Journal* in November, titled “Environmentally Beneficial Electrification: Electricity as the End-Use Option.”

Dennis is the senior principal of end-use solutions and standards at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). His article challenges basic assumptions about electricity and the environment that make a difference for top-level policy makers, as well as for co-op members.

His focus on water heaters and heat pumps is especially significant since heating water and air account for more than half of a home’s energy use.

Here are answers Dennis gave to questions about the research behind his article:

A central claim in your article is that an electric water heater has less environmental impact than a natural gas water heater. How can this be true, when burning natural gas emits less greenhouse gas than burning coal, which generates about a third of our nation’s electricity?

Technologies have gotten so advanced that a water heater in your home can be 200 percent or more efficient at converting electricity into heat. It does this by taking some of the energy out of the surrounding air in what’s called a heat pump.

Heat pumps are being used more and more for space heating, and more recently, heat pump technology is being used in water heaters.

And a natural gas water heater actually burns the gas in your home. So you need to vent that air out of your home through a flue. To do that, you are essentially making large holes in your home and pumping air in and out, reducing energy efficiency.

Explain the contention in your article that buying a gas water heater locks you out of future improvements in efficiency.

Once you install a gas appliance in your home, you are stuck with that technology for its 10- to 20-year life. During that time, solar panels and wind turbines will be generating a bigger share of the nation’s electricity. Coal power plant efficiency will be improv-



Electric water heaters and heat pumps are better options than natural gas for both the environment and for reducing home energy costs.

How to Choose Efficient Appliances

It's never a good day when you realize you need to replace a large appliance in your home. However, when the unfortunate time comes, be sure to take a moment and consider what you will purchase — especially for appliances that haven't been replaced in a number of years, as the technology may have changed substantially. Instead of rushing out to buy the same make and model of appliance you had, consider this an opportunity to assess the market and make a smart purchase that will save you money in the long run.

According to the Department of Energy, appliances account for about 13 percent of the average household's energy use. Clothes dryers, refrigerators/freezers, computers, microwaves, dishwashers and washing machines are the appliances that tend to use the most energy in a typical American home. Every appliance you buy has an operating cost, which is the cost of the energy needed to power the appliance. To facilitate more informed comparison shopping, the federal government requires some appliances to have an Energy Guide

label stating the approximate energy consumption and operating cost of the appliance. Appliances with an ENERGY STAR® label use 10 percent to 50 percent less energy than standard appliances and are generally more expensive than their standard counterparts. So, it's important to compare the lifetime costs of each (up-front cost + operating cost) to ensure that purchasing the efficient appliance is the best choice.

In addition to looking at the efficiency of your new appliance, make sure to consider its size. Purchasing an appliance that is too large for your needs will lead to more energy being used. For example, laptops or small desktops (e.g., the Mac Mini) use only one-quarter of the energy of typical desktop PCs and have sufficient memory and processing speeds for many common applications. This same principle applies to refrigerators, air conditioners and more.

As you begin your search for a new appliance, check with your electric cooperative to see if they offer incentives for energy efficient appliances, and remember to use the ENERGY STAR website as an additional resource.



Dramatic advancements in the efficiency of many electric appliances now can provide the same level of end-user comfort with substantially less electric input. With a little research and forethought up-front, you can save money over the life of your appliance without sacrificing any benefits. Good luck, and happy shopping!

Thomas Kirk is a technical research analyst specializing in energy efficiency and renewable energy for the Cooperative Research Network (CRN), a service of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

ing. The only way to benefit from those trends would be to have an electric appliance.

You make a point that using an electric appliance can make you part of a broad, national solution to improving energy efficiency.

In addition to the high efficiency of the electric appliance itself, there are electric system efficiencies that can be achieved through the ability to choose the time when you use the electricity. For example, your water heater is able to operate as a type of battery and better batteries are part of what's needed to make renewable energy more useful. Solar panels only make electricity when the sun shines and wind turbines only make electricity when the wind blows. A hidden value of water heaters is that they can serve as a storage technology — the water they heat stays hot for a long time because they are well insulated. An electric car can work the same way — once it's charged, it stores energy for when it's going to be driven. By storing energy when it is available and then using it when it is needed, these technologies are increasing the overall efficiency of our energy resources.

Many electric co-ops have load-control programs that take advantage of that energy storage ability to more effectively manage the flow of power. Those load control programs return that value to the co-op member by helping pay some of the up-front costs for these more efficient appliances through rebates or other incentives.

You claim there's a huge flaw in the way we calculate a lot of the leading energy efficiency standards, from ENERGY STAR® ratings to construction standards. How do they miss the mark?

The formulas being used to calculate energy efficiency for these major programs don't take into account several realities. Those include the increases in renewable energy and natural

gas to generate electricity, power plant efficiencies, load management programs and other advantages of electricity we've talked about in this interview. Those metrics for calculating energy efficiency were designed before a lot of these trends. Despite these trends, the metrics still treat all electricity as coming from inefficient coal plants. That's just clearly wrong.

These incorrect efficiency metrics lead to bad energy decisions. In my article, I quote the Natural Resources Defense Council as saying that these metrics "have serious deficiencies for the purpose of setting a product standard; they are simply not the right numbers to inform good standards decisions."

NRECA and others have been working with policy makers to change those metrics. What is the status?

Very positive. It's a long bureaucratic process, but we are hoping that the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency will work with us to address these issues. Along with the environmental community, the renewable energy community and other energy stakeholders, we have begun that process.

You conclude your article with the bold statement that "incentivizing beneficial electrification with appliances available today would immediately reduce carbon dioxide emissions."

For policy makers and co-op members, more and more you are going to see the ability to achieve end-use emissions reductions and energy efficiency improvements by choosing electric end-use options over direct fossil fuel use like oil, natural gas, gasoline and diesel. This will achieve energy efficiency, cost savings and environmental benefits.

Paul Wesslund writes on cooperative issues 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

February 24-28

SD State Dart Tournament
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

February 26-27

SD High School State Wrestling
Tournaments, All Classes
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
Rapid City, SD, 605-224-9261

February 26-28

Sioux Empire Wacipi
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

March 3

Brantley Gilbert
The Blackout Tour, Rushmore
Plaza Civic Center Ice Arena
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

March 1

Lil' Wayne: The Dedication
Tour, Sioux Falls, SD
605-367-7288

March 4-5

SD High School State Debate
and IE Tournament, Central
High School, Aberdeen, SD

March 4-5

Holiday Arts Spring Craft
Show, Masonic Temple
Mitchell, SD, 605-248-2526

March 5

Custer Trade Show
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Custer, SD, 605-673-2244

March 10-12

SD High School State A Girls
Basketball Tournament
Civic Arena, Watertown, SD
605-224-9261, www.sdhsaa.com



PHOTO COURTESY OF MAKENZIE HUBER/SDSU COLLEGIAN

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

March 10-12

SD High School State B Girls
Basketball Tournament
Huron Arena, Huron, SD
605-224-9261

March 12-13

2016 Gun Show
American Legion Hall
Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. MST
Philip, SD, 605-859-2635
605-859-2280, 605-859-2892
or 605-859-2219

March 17-19

SD High School State AA Girls
Basketball Tournament
Premier Center, Arena
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-224-9261
www.sdhsaa.com

March 17-19

SD High School State AA Boys
Basketball Tournament
Premier Center, Sioux Falls
Arena, Sioux Falls, SD
605-224-9261

March 17-19

SD High School State A Boys
Basketball Tournament
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
Rapid City, SD, 605-224-9261

March 17-19

SD High School State B Boys
Basketball Tournament
Barnett Center, Aberdeen, SD
605-224-9261

March 18-20

South Dakota Taxidermy
Competition and Convention
Watertown, SD, 712-540-5868

March 19-20

Curt Carter Memorial Gun
Show, Watertown, SD
605-793-2347

April 1-3

Annual Hats Off to the Artists
Art Show, Faulkton, SD
605-598-6525

Events of Special Note

March 5-8

2016 Summit League
Basketball Championship
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

March 7

Harlem Globetrotters
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
Ice Arena, Rapid City, SD
605-394-4115

April 2-3

Professional Bull Riders
Built Ford Tough Series
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

April 8-10

Sioux Empire Film Festival
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-4616

April 9-10

Dakota Territory Gun Show
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

April 14

Red Green "I'm Not Old - I'm
Ripe" Tour, Sioux Falls, SD
605-367-4616

April 23

Jeff Dunham: Perfectly
Unbalanced Tour
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

April 24

Jeff Dunham: Perfectly
Unbalanced Tour
Rapid City, SD, 800-468-6463