

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Former co-op general manager Jim Moore is one of the original organizers of the Line Patrol Charity Ride and was the designated lead rider in 2021 as the group embarked on its adventure

Line Patrol Charity Ride

20 years of assisting
co-op families
Pages 8-9

Food co-ops meet
community needs
Pages 12-13

2022 is shaping up to be a record year

We continue to work our way through another record-setting year. Between the cold weather we had this past winter to this year's extremely hot and dry summer, we managed to set a new electric peak for your cooperative and the entire nine state region.

Having a sufficient supply of power is one of the huge benefits we have from our Cooperative Power Supply system. We work together to plan, coordinate, build and operate your generation, transmission and distribution resources, so we can meet your growing needs for dependable, reliable, and affordable electric service today, tomorrow and for many years into the future.

In addition to weather related issues in 2022, we are again setting new records for electric services throughout our service area, creating a huge workload for our Operations, Office and Member Services departments. Our employees are working hard to make sure we have materials available to serve your electrical needs.

We encourage you to keep us informed as soon as possible of any expansion or new service requirements. Material, supplies and shipping delays continue to create a huge challenge for us. Our employee group does an excellent job coordinating all the work to be done, handling the variety of outage situations from contractors digging into our lines on a nice summer day, storm damage repair, ordering the materials we need, answering your questions over the phone or out in the field. I for one am very proud to work for your electric cooperative, with your dedicated Board of Directors and with such a loyal and hard-working group of Employees to serve you with the electric service you need.

Your Board of Directors authorized the retirement of just over \$2,500,000 in capital credits to current and past Southeastern Members. If you are a current/active Member of Southeastern, you saw your share of past revenues above the cost to provide you with electric service credited on your August bill that came out the first part of September. What that means is there will be a little bit less to pay on your electric bill this month as we return those capital credits back to you allowing you the opportunity to use that extra money for other items.

From the \$2,500,000 being paid out, 15,274 current/active members saw a credit on their electric bill, another 8,828 past members will be receiving a check in the mail since they no longer receive electric service from us. With this year's capital credit retirement, your electric cooperative has returned over \$40,750,000 back to our members. That is the nonprofit/member-owned/cooperative way of doing business!

Before we know it, we will be celebrating Cooperative Month again this October. We THANK ALL Southeastern Members for your continued support and the relationships we build with you each day. We work hard to provide you with quality programs and reliable, affordable electric service when you need it at the flip of a switch.

Please make plans to celebrate Cooperative Month with us at an upcoming Member Appreciation/Pancake Days.

Please make plans to celebrate Cooperative Month with us at an upcoming Member Appreciation/Pancake Days scheduled for November 2, 3, 4 and 5, 2022. After a successful kick-off last year we will again be asking members attending our Appreciation Days to bring canned goods, peanut butter, toilet paper, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant, dish soap or other useable items to these events to support your local Food Pantry.

Our plans are to accumulate those items and distribute them to the local food pantries in the counties we serve to help those organizations meet their growing needs. We feel this is a great opportunity to help others with donations from our members, matched by Southeastern Electric. We thank you for your participation in helping us, help others.

Until next month, please be safe with all your fall home, farm and work activities. Look up for overhead power lines and remember to call 811 before you start your digging activities so that all underground facilities can be properly located. Please think about electrical safety in all your fall activities.

Happy belated Labor Day and Happy Cooperative Month to ALL Southeastern Electric Cooperative Members!



Brad Schardin
General Manager

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

SOUTHEASTERN ELECTRIC

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Southeastern Electric Cooperative Member Appreciation Days

Free Pancake and Sausage Supper

- Nov. 2, Alcester Community Center – 5 to 7 p.m.
- Nov. 3, Salem Area Office/Warehouse – 5 to 7 p.m.
- Nov. 4, Viborg Community Building – 5 to 7 p.m.
- Nov. 5, Sioux Falls Office/Warehouse, I-29, Lennox, #68 exit – 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

As we enter the season of giving, we are asking attendees to bring canned food items for the local Food Pantries. Items such as canned meats, vegetables, soups, cereals, paper products, cleaning supplies, diapers and personal hygiene items. (Please make sure items are not expired) Cash donation will also be accepted and welcomed.

Send us your favorite recipes!

We are looking for original or your favorite recipes that are a hit at your house. Each month we hold a drawing from the recipes that are submitted for a \$10 credit on the winner's electric account. Last month's winner was Laurie Wernke of Lennox, S.D. Congratulations, Laurie! All recipes submitted will be entered in a yearly drawing for a grand prize at the Annual Membership Meeting held each June.

All recipes we receive are forwarded to SDREA for possible publication in Southeastern Electric Cooperative Connections. Recipes for the November 2022 magazine should be submitted by Oct. 1. You may e-mail your recipes to brett@southeastern.coop. Upcoming recipe topics are crockpot in November and holiday desserts in December.

Practice fire safety this fall and winter

When the weather turns colder, you inevitably start hearing more news about house fires. Even a small fire can be devastating.

Most house fires are caused by cooking that gets out of hand. But the second most common cause is materials in the home that catch fire. This often occurs when a heat source, such as a space heater or flying embers from a fireplace, comes into contact with fabric or paper, which then ignites. Once a fire starts, it can move so rapidly that even the best efforts to put it out may fail.

When it comes to old houses, the risks are even higher. The older the wood is that a house is constructed of, the faster it burns. Once flames invade the walls of an old house, they move with frightening speed.

Fire protection in any home is necessary, but even more careful precautions should be taken if your house is older. Here's how to help ensure the safety of your house and everyone in it.

SMOKE DETECTORS. These are the first and best line of defense; they allow you to get out of the house at the first whiff of smoke. Six in 10 deaths in house fires occurred in homes that did not have working smoke detectors. Go beyond the federal recommendations and put a smoke detector in every room. Stay on the even safer side by opting for those that detect both smoke and carbon monoxide.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS. Keep small fires from getting out of control with fire extinguishers that are easily accessible. Choose several extinguishers that are light enough for even kids to handle. Make sure they have simple pull mechanisms that don't require much strength. Look for fire extinguishers that work for various parts of the house; for instance, an extinguisher in the kitchen should be able to handle grease fires.

INSTALL ARC-FAULT INTERRUPTERS. These ingenious little gadgets detect the electrical arcing that occurs when an old wire buried deep in your wall begins to fail. Speak with an electrician about where best to install interrupters and how your particular ones work.

MAINTAIN IT ALL. Finally, test everything on a regular basis. Smoke detectors should be tested every month, their batteries replaced every six months, and old smoke detectors replaced every 10 years. Opt to purchase an extra fire extinguisher so your family can take it to the backyard and practice using it.

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES REPRESENT AT DAKOTAFEST



Electric cooperative representatives were on hand at the 2022 Dakotafest in Mitchell to share information about energy efficiency and electric-powered lawn implements and to showcase a 2022 Ford Lightning electric pickup truck provided by Vern Eide Ford. Shown left to right are Sheila Gross, Jared Rakness, Jennifer Gross, Patrick Soukup, Kristie Hauck, Brett Snyders and Tara Miller.

To see a video of this event and learn more about how electric cooperatives serve our members, visit Cooperative Connections Plus by scanning the QR code at right.



Do not touch power lines

Kendyl Gill

Kendyl knows that electricity always seeks a path to the ground and that all power lines should be treated as if they are energized. Kendyl is the child of Brent and Emily Gill, and they are members of Moreau-Grand Electric based in Timber Lake.

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.

PRIMO PASTA!

PASTA WITH ZUCCHINI AND TOMATOES

Ingredients:

- 7 oz. short whole wheat pasta like penne fusilli or farfalle
- 2 lbs. zucchini, chopped
- 1 lb. grape or cherry tomatoes cut in halves
- 3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 6 garlic cloves minced
- 1/3 c. Parmesan cheese grated
- 1 c. parsley or 1/2 cup basil finely chopped
- 1 tsp. salt
- Ground black pepper to taste

METHOD

Cook pasta per package instructions undercooking by 2-3 minutes or until pasta is cooked but firm. While pasta is cooking, preheat large ceramic non-stick skillet on medium-high heat and swirl 1 tbsp. of oil to coat. Add zucchini and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Transfer to a bowl and set aside. Return skillet to stove, swirl 1 tbsp. of oil to coat, add tomatoes and cook for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute, stirring a few times. Turn off heat and add cooked pasta and zucchini, remaining 1 tbsp. of oil, salt, pepper, cheese and parsley or basil; stir and serve. Adjust seasonings to taste. ifoodreal.com

MEXI-CORN LASAGNA

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. ground beef, browned and drained
- 1 can Mexican corn
- 1 can (15 oz.) tomato sauce
- 1 c. Pace picante sauce
- 1 tbsp. chili powder
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- 16 oz. low-fat cottage cheese
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 c. parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp. oregano
- 1/2 tsp. garlic salt
- 12 corn tortillas
- 1 c. shredded cheddar cheese

METHOD

Combine first six ingredients in large skillet. Simmer 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Combine cottage cheese, eggs, parmesan cheese, oregano and garlic salt; mix well. Arrange 6 tortillas on bottom and sides of a lightly greased 13x9x2 baking dish, overlapping as necessary. Top with half the meat mixture. Spoon cheese mixture over meat. Arrange remaining tortillas over cheese. Top with remaining meat mixture. Bake 375 degrees for 20 minutes or until hot and bubbly. Remove from oven and sprinkle with cheddar cheese. Let stand 10 minutes, serve with additional picante sauce. Serves 8. **Carol and Rollie Smith, Brandon**

BAKED SPAGHETTI

Ingredients:

- 8 oz. package angel hair pasta
- 1/4 c. chopped parsley
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 lb. ground pork
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. garlic salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1 1/2 tsp. sugar
- 1 tbsp. Italian seasonings
- 2 c. tomato sauce
- 1 c. water
- 2 c. canned crushed tomatoes
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 garlic cloves chopped
- 1/2 c. green peppers chopped
- 1/2 c. onion chopped
- 1 c. shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 c. shredded Monterey Jack cheese

METHOD

Cook pasta and set aside. Add 1 tbsp. olive oil to pasta and stir in to keep it from sticking together. Precook beef and pork together with salt, garlic salt and black pepper. Drain grease off and set aside. In a large pan add parsley, Italian seasonings, tomato sauce and water, garlic, green peppers, onions and crushed tomatoes. Bring sauce to a boil then reduce to a simmer and continue to cook for 30 minutes. Add cooked meat to the sauce. Let set while preparing the baking pan. Grease a 9x13 inch pan. Layer sauce with spaghetti noodles in the pan. Bake 350 degrees for 30 minutes. At 30 minutes pull spaghetti from the oven and mix cheeses together then pour on spaghetti evenly. Bake 5-10 minutes until cheese is melted **Jane Cave, Sioux Falls**

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2022. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Brucklacher Wins Meco Electric Grill at Turner Co. Fair

Marlene Brucklacher of Freeman was the lucky winner for the drawing of the Meco Electric Grill.

Hundreds of visitors stopped by Southeastern Electric Cooperative's exhibit booth to see our educational displays, ask questions about energy efficiency and renewable power and to sign up for a chance to win this handy electric grill at this year's Turner County Fair in Parker.

Thanks to all who participated in the give-away.



Lineman certification

Congratulations to linemen Reichert and Husby

SEC announces that Noah Reichert and Jacob Husby have completed the Power Delivery Program from Northwest Lineman College in May and now are certified Journeyman linemen. Both Noah and Jacob serve the membership out of our Sioux Falls area office.

Congratulations to these two men for completing the two-year online course and becoming Journeyman linemen!



Southeastern Electric Cooperative General Manager Brad Schardin congratulates Noah Reichert (above left) and Jacob Husby (above right) on achieving their status as Journeyman linemen.

Board summary report for August 2022

The Board of Directors of Southeastern Electric Cooperative met in Marion on Thursday, August 25, 2022, with all directors present. Also, present were Manager Brad Schardin, Attorney Mike Nadolski and staff members John Euchner and Todd Nelson.

Manager Schardin in his report reviewed with the board the following items:

1. Discussed with the board the NRECA Regional meeting, local Verizon cell phone issues, NuGen self-generation status and territory swap with Central Electric Cooperative.

2. Updated the board on the Sioux Falls office expansion and provided a copy of the executed Purchase Agreement between Southeastern and East River Electric.

3. Reviewed the circulation folder and various member-related issues.

CFO Jon Wunder was absent, so Manager Schardin reviewed his written report, Schardin included the preliminary

financial report for July 2022 and the power billing over the past month.

Operations Manager John Euchner reviewed his written report, the monthly safety report, close calls, new services, the outage report and dispatch reports. He also commented on the construction work plan status and amendments, the status of the FEMA mitigation work, the status of the construction work plan for 2023-2026 and recent storm damage.

Member Services and IT Manager Todd Nelson reviewed his written report, answered questions on the electric bus program, recent solar inquiries, disconnect date, energy assistance, cybersecurity and load management.

In his legal report, Attorney Nadolski discussed recent topics from the NRECA Legal seminar.

The board acted on the following motions:

- A motion was made and seconded to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried.

- A motion was made and seconded to accept the management reports as presented. Motion carried.

- A motion was made and seconded to approve Board Resolution #2022-05 the approval of the 2023-2026 Construction Work Plan. Motion carried.

- A motion was made and seconded to contribute to the Lincoln County Fairgrounds for the permanent livestock facility. Motion carried.

- A motion was made and seconded to select Terveen and Carlos Hofer as the cooperative's voting delegate and alternate, respectively for the Mid-West Annual Meeting. Motion carried.

- A motion was made and seconded to set the October board meeting for Thursday, October 27, 2022, at the Marion office. Motion carried.

Next regular monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 20, 2022, at the Marion office.

Don't forget safety during harvest season

October is Cooperative Month and what better time to remind us of the safety issues that will affect us this harvest season.

Every year many farmers are killed when their farm equipment makes contact with overhead power lines. These tragic accidents are preventable. Before heading back into the fields, Southeastern Electric urges you to review the activities and work practices that take place around power utilities.

Many times, farmers hire help for the busy harvest season. Keep in mind that the hired help is not always aware of the power lines and other dangers that are present on the farm. Make sure that everyone who is working on the farm is reminded or shown the location of power lines on and around the farm.

Farm related accidents that involve power line contact happen when loading

or preparing to transport equipment to fields, or while performing maintenance on machinery. It can be difficult to estimate distance and sometimes power lines are closer than they appear. A spotter or someone with a broader view can help. Pay special attention when raising the arms of planters, cultivators, truck beds and especially augers.

There are many different dangers excluding overhead power lines. Poles, underground cabinets, and guy wires are among the other dangers that farmers have to deal with. While looking up don't forget to look around. Poles, underground cabinets and guy wires are not always placed in convenient locations for farming.

It's important to know what to do if the vehicle comes in contact with one of these hazards. If you come in contact with

a guy wire and break it, call the utility to fix it immediately. (Do not touch it or try fixing it yourself.) Also, if your vehicle or equipment comes in contact with an energized line, it is almost always best to stay in or away and wait until the electric utility arrives to make sure power to the line is cut off.

Some ways of making your farm safer is by burying power lines around buildings or busy pathways where many farm activities take place. If planning a new building, bin or farm structure, contact Southeastern Electric for information on minimum safe clearances from overhead and underground power lines. Keep in mind you may also have to increase the transformer size too if you are adding load.

If you have questions or concerns, please stop in or call us at 800-33-2859.



Roger Lawien and his wife, Kris, are regular participants in the Line Patrol Charity Ride. *Photos by Brad Letcher*

Line Patrol Charity Ride marks 20 years of serving those in need

Billy Gibson

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When Roger Lawien encountered some unexpected health problems, his fear and anxiety were assuaged by the assurance that he had several key factors in his favor.

He knew he could rely on his faith. He knew he could rely on his family. And he knew he could rely on his fellow cooperative employees across the state.

Lawien, member services manager at Moreau-Grand Electric based in Timber Lake, is a part-time volunteer and full-time advocate of Line Patrol, Inc., a charitable organization that exists to provide financial relief for South Dakota electric cooperative employees and their families in times of need.

Since the program was launched in 2003, hundreds of co-op employees have contributed to the emergency response fund by staging golf tournaments, bowling tournaments, auctions, trap shoots, 5K runs, raffles,

bake sales and more. One of the most popular and highly anticipated events is the annual Line Patrol Charity Ride held each September.

This year's 20th annual event took place on Sept. 10 and was co-hosted by Rushmore Electric, Butte Electric and Grand Electric. More than 200 riders and other participants gathered in Whitewood at the Iron Horse Inn and spent the afternoon motoring through the picturesque northern Black Hills.

Lawien was there perched aboard his prized Indian Roadmaster, soaking in the experience with his co-op friends and feeling grateful to have a dependable network of support that can be counted on not only to help rebuild lines and poles after a storm but also render aid in a personal crisis situation.

"Having been a recipient of funds from this program, it means a lot to be among these fellow co-op employees who are all so eager and willing to demonstrate their kindness and sincerity by showing up every year to contribute

Estimated amount of Line Patrol funds

\$580,000

donated to electric co-op employees

to a worthy cause like this," Lawien said. "It's that same cooperative spirit that bonds us all together. It's the can-do attitude they bring to their jobs every day in service to their members and their ongoing efforts to improve the quality of life in their communities. They are salt-of-the-earth people who care deeply for one another and the people around them."

Lawien said more than 240 families have received assistance through the fund totaling roughly \$580,000. He is one of three directors of the program along with Jessie Tucker (West Central Electric) and Tim Neises (Central Electric).

Jerry Swartz was one of the first



Jerry Swartz, pictured above-left, was the first recipient of Line Patrol funds after he was injured in 2004.

recipients of Line Patrol funds after he was involved in a workplace accident. He expressed what the charitable organization has meant to him and his family.

“Back in 2004, I had an extreme accident at work. I spent six months in recovery and this foundation gave us a check for \$500 to help us out. It may not seem like much money, but at the time it meant everything to me and my family. It’s amazing. God bless this fund and the people who donate to it and keep it running,” Swartz said.

One of the original organizers of the Charity Ride is former Northern Electric General Manager Jim Moore. Each year, as is the custom, Moore leads the cavalcade of dozens of motorcycles

away from the gathering site and along the chosen route.

“The ride has just gotten bigger and better over the years,” Moore said. “The money goes to help co-op employees in need. One person had a tornado damage their home, another lineman from Yankton was killed in Afghanistan and we set up a scholarship fund for his three children. I always tell my wife, Janice, this is the one thing I look forward to every year and truly love because we’re helping employees and their families get back on their feet.”

Laine Mitchell, communications director at Butte Electric, said helping to host the Charity Ride was an honor for the cooperative and something the organization was happy to support.

“Having many of our own employees benefit from the Line Patrol fund over the years, we are thrilled to co-host this year’s event and help raise money for other cooperative families across South Dakota. The ride is just one of the many ways the foundation bonds our cooperatives together and has touched countless lives in the last 20 years,” Mitchell said.

The weekend began with a social on Friday evening and concluded the following night with a buffet dinner and charity auction.

Sponsors for this year’s ride were Irby, Altec, RESCO, Dakota Supply Group, Border States Electric, WESCO and The Okonite Company.



Hundreds of riders from across the state participate in the annual Line Patrol Charity Ride each year. The program exists to provide financial support for electric cooperative employees and their families in times of need.

New Canistota Substation Up and Running



East River Electric has been working on a new Substation for Southeastern Electric south of Canistota. The new substation was built to handle the new load in the area. The expansion of the VanWinkle Dairy barn operation and all the new homes going up in the Lake Vermillion area. Southeastern linecrews got to tour the new sub. The sub will be fully on-line in September.



Sioux Falls office expansion progresses



The construction project to expand the Sioux Falls area office facility is progressing on pace. The office is being expanded and upgraded to deliver better service to cooperative members as part of SEC's strategic planning process.

Progress is being made with the Sioux Falls area office expansion and addition.

The office facility is located just south of Sioux Falls on I-29, just off exit #68.

A smaller two-office addition was just completed on the east side of our existing office. This allowed us to shuffle some cooperative employees around as we move forward with the remodeling and the two-story addition.

We are looking forward to the

much-needed office/meeting room space on schedule to open in 2023 as we work to meet your growing electrical needs.

This expansion plan is part of our need for additional office space as we relocate more and more employees to our Sioux Falls office facilities.

In addition to the much needed office space, we will begin analyzing the need for additional warehouse space as well. This is due to the fact that we are currently growing our inventory levels and equipment to



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meet the extended lead times for manufacturing, shipping and receiving the necessary materials.

We continue to work hard each and every day to meet our member's needs and plan for the growth that your electric cooperative is experiencing now and the increasing demand we expect to see in the future.



CO-OPS OFFER HEALTHY CHOICES

The Sioux Falls Food Co-op has persevered for 50 years by adhering to the co-op model. *Photo by Sioux Falls Food Co-op*

Food co-ops meet the need for nutritious, healthy choices

Billy Gibson

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Back in the 1930s, rural community leaders all across the country began traveling from farm to farm knocking on doors and asking for \$5 as seed money to build out a network of electric distribution systems.

It was not an insignificant sum to solicit from many farmers and ranchers contending with substandard soil conditions, the vagaries of weather patterns and fairly primitive mechanization compared to today's operations.

But in exchange for that investment, those same community leaders turned the promise of rural power into a reality and presently there are more than 750 locally-owned electric cooperatives serving roughly 40 million Americans.

Bess Pallares keeps that electric co-op success story close to mind as she embarks on establishing a grocery store in Brookings County using the

cooperative business model as her template.

Pallares is president of the Dakota Community Market board of directors, whose members have been working since 2019 to bring a food cooperative to the Brookings area. She reports that the endeavor hasn't been a cake walk, but she continues to be inspired by the way like-minded electric co-op leaders back in the '30s managed to gain popular support for locally-owned, independent entities created to provide a valuable service.

The board's market analysis indicates that a "low food access zone" exists within Brookings County when it comes to full-service retail grocery stores with just two providers in a 50-mile radius.

"On average, there are typically 2.84 grocery stores per 10,000 population. We have .68 in this area," she said. "People keep saying they're sick of having to drive miles and miles to get to a full-service grocery store that stocks



Bess Pallares

what they want and need for their families."

To generate start-up capital, the board is offering memberships at \$150, a little more than a week's worth of groceries for many families. Meanwhile, Pallares and her board members are scouring the landscape for additional financing sources and federal grant opportunities with plans to have a retail store up and running as soon as possible.

She has had discussions with East River Electric in Madison about accessing available funds through the Rural Electric Economic Development Fund (REED). The REED program



Caselli's Garden is among a growing list of fresh food suppliers for Dakota Community Market. *Photo by Caselli's Garden*

is designed to provide financing to help build the economic base of rural communities within East River Electric's regional service area. Hundreds of organizations, businesses, medical facilities, housing projects and many more have received financial support through the REED program over the past 20 years.

Hundreds of organizations, businesses, medical facilities, housing projects and many more have received financial support through the REED program over the past 20 years.

Pallares said she sometimes feels exactly like those early electric cooperative pioneers, attempting to pave the way for providing a reliable source of quality, low-cost food in the Brookings area. She has become active in the Billie Sutton Leadership Institute Rural POWER program to help tap into the regional business community with the goal of developing an optimum financial strategy and making connections with future suppliers and other partners.

"The Institute opens up a giant network across the state where you can meet a lot of people doing the same kinds of things you're doing, and they've

got great ideas and big goals and a fearless entrepreneurial spirit. One of our board members has gone through the class and I'm doing it now. It's been transformational," she said.

The Dakota Community Market is not the only fearless group striving to launch a locally-owned and locally-controlled food cooperative. The Coteau Community Co-op is also trying to establish a food co-op to serve the Watertown area. Both have plenty of successful models and supporters to help guide and inspire their efforts.

The National Food Co-op Startup Network and the National Co-op Grocers based in Minneapolis are both available to provide resources and expertise. Additionally, there are a few successful stores already operating in South Dakota, including Natural Abundance in Aberdeen, Breadroot Natural Food Co-op based in Rapid City and the Sioux Falls Food Co-op.

Patrick Saylor is general manager of the Sioux Falls Food Co-op on West 18th Street, an operation that has been going strong for the past 50 years through several relocations, growing competition and even a fire. Saylor sees food co-ops across the region as sharing the same common goals and working together to accomplish those goals.

"We tend to put a different twist on things, but in the end we all want the families we serve to have a better way of

accessing the food they eat to maintain good health and a healthy lifestyle," said Saylor, who used to frequent the store as a teen and replaced long-time manager Molly Langley in 2016. "It's always encouraging to see different leaders working hard to do what we've been able to do. It takes a lot of effort and it takes tireless visionaries to stay focused and committed to achieving what you want to accomplish together."

In meeting its commitment to improve the quality of life in the community, the co-op has a program called Big Change, where shoppers are invited to round up their expenditures to the next whole dollar amount. The difference is added to a fund that goes to support local charities such as the Teddy Bear Den, Mobile Pantry of Sioux Falls, Bishop Dudley Hospitality House, SD Voices for Peace and many more. The co-op even has a space available for public meetings and workshops.

The store recently celebrated an expansion and re-opening, and Saylor said he's optimistic about the future while keeping an eye on industry trends.

"We're growing. There's a lot of competition, but we've got a great location, great employees and a great product," he said. "The co-op model is alive and well. We have members who support us and are committed to our mission of providing a source of healthy, affordable good choices."



Black Hills State University is one of four higher ed institutions to adopt the Build Your Base with Beef program. *Photo by BHSU Athletics*

Beef is what's for lunch in many local school district cafeterias

Billy Gibson

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Beef. It may be what's for dinner, but now it's what's for lunch in many school cafeterias across the state.

In January of 2019, the Wall School District launched a program called "Beef to School" in an effort to add locally-raised beef to the weekly lunch menu and provide protein-rich meals to meet the nutritional needs of the students. At the time, it was billed as the first program of its kind in South Dakota.

The pandemic threatened to scuttle the initiative before it had the chance to gain momentum, but school district leaders, parents and supporters stuck to their mission and today the program has spread to nearly 20 local school districts.

Wall Meat Processing located just north of town is at the center of the action, identifying and working with local ranchers to deliver beef products for hungry students.

Inflation and rising market prices have also presented challenges, but Food Services Director Lynn Dunker stresses that community support has been key to success.

"The price of groceries and the price of everything just keeps going up," Dunker said, "but we've had individuals donate monetary funds out of their own pockets, and Wall Meat Processing is doing what they can to help us and to get other processors involved. We have a very supportive community and they've really been backing this program because they know how important it is that children get good nutrition."

In fact, it was local rancher and concerned citizen Josh Geigle who brought the Beef to School idea to the district leaders after learning about a similar program in Nebraska.

Dunker said the program is part of a popular farm-to-school model that emphasizes locally-grown fresh foods that are generally healthier for young students and their cognitive, behavioral

and physical development.

Besides benefiting from quality nutrition, students also have the opportunity to learn more about where their food comes from and the importance of ranching and farming to the overall success of the community.

"Some maybe don't even realize where beef comes from in the first place," said Wall School District Superintendent Dan Baldwin. "And now when they found out it's their dad, their uncle, a family member, it's actually someone from their ranch, I think that's a really neat thing."

BUILD YOUR BASE WITH BEEF

Another protein promoting program reaching both high school and college students is called Build Your Base with Beef and is specifically directed at athletes who rely on good nutrition to perform at their maximum level.

The South Dakota Beef Industry Council, Sanford Health and the Sanford Sports Science Institute have teamed up to develop a comprehensive tool kit for student-athletes that includes ready-to-use educational materials that help students and their

AFTER WORK BEEF POT ROAST

Ingredients:

- 1 beef Bottom Round Rump Roast (3 to 3-1/2 lbs.)
- 1 envelope (0.7 z.) Italian dressing mix
- 2 large onions, each cut into 8 wedges
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 red bell peppers, cut into 1-1/2 inch pieces
- 1/2 cup beef broth
- 2 zucchini, cut into 1/4-inch thick slices
- 2-1/2 tbs. cornstarch dissolved in 2 tbs. water

Directions

Press dressing mix evenly onto all surfaces of beef roast. Place onions and garlic in 4-1/2 to 5-1/2-quart slow cooker; top with roast. Add bell peppers and broth. Cover and cook on high 5 hours or low 8 hours. Add zucchini. Continue cooking, covered, 30 minutes or until pot roast is fork-tender. Remove roast and vegetables. Strain cooking liquid; skim fat. Combine 2 cups cooking liquid and cornstarch mixture in medium saucepan. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly; cook and stir 1 minute or until thickened. Carve roast into slices; season with salt and pepper, as desired. Serve with vegetables and gravy.

families adopt more healthy lifestyle choices, practices and habits.

Build Your Base has been endorsed by the National Scholastic Athletics Foundation (NSAF) and recently expanded its reach by appearing at the 2022 Nike Indoor Nationals in New York City last spring. Jack Links serves as the official snack sponsor of the program.

Chris Nilsen, a pole vault record-holder, Olympic silver medalist and former University of South Dakota student, has endorsed the program along with other prominent Olympic athletes such as hammer thrower Deanna Price and shot putter Payton Otterdahl.

“Build Your Base prepped me so well, and without this nutritional approach I wouldn’t be in such great shape. Eating well is such a big part of competing well, and they absolutely do their part,” Nilsen said.

Along with four colleges and universities, more than 25 South Dakota high schools have adopted Build Your Base and integrated it into their athletic departments and lesson plans.

Athletes learn how to determine the proper amounts of beef protein to consume for optimal effect in the maintaining, building and repairing of muscle.



Co-op leaders visit Southwest Power Pool facilities in Arkansas

A contingent of more than 35 electric cooperative leaders from throughout South Dakota and western Minnesota recently visited the facilities of the Southwest Power Pool based in Little Rock, Ark.

The Southwest Power Pool (SPP) is the Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) responsible for managing the electric grid and wholesale power market throughout a 13-state region that spans from the Canadian border to northern Texas.

While RTOs seldom attract much public attention, the polar vortex that swept across the country in the winter of 2021 placed grid operators closer to the spotlight. The roles and responsibilities of RTOs have also come to the fore with concerns over extreme weather events, changing market forces, aging infrastructure, grid congestion, the emergence of renewable power sources and other issues.

The tour was organized by Codington-Clark Electric General Manager Dave Eide. He said he initiated the event because he believed electric cooperatives that transmit and distribute power within the SPP’s footprint would benefit from engaging in face-to-face interactions with those responsible for moving electricity across the grid.

“This was a very eye-opening visit, as we were able to see first-hand how the Southwest Power Pool operates,” Eide said. “Coordination is key, and having personal interaction with the professionals at SPP helps in preparation for the next storm event.”

Eide explained that in the real-time generation, transmission and delivery of electricity, supply and demand must balance out to provide 24-hour continuous service that is safe, efficient and affordable for consumers. When situations develop that threaten to throw the system out of equilibrium, RTOs work in collaboration with utilities throughout the service area to keep the network stable.

The process includes communicating with those entities under the RTO’s umbrella to take decisive measures to modulate either the supply or the demand.



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.

To view the publication's master event calendar, scan the QR code below:



Or visit <https://sdrea.coop/cooperative-connections-event-calendar> to view more upcoming events.

SEPT. 29-OCT. 1
Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup & Arts Festival
 Custer, SD
 605-255-4515

SEPT. 30-OCT. 1
Oktoberfest
 Citywide, Deadwood, SD
 605-578-1876

SEPT. 30-OCT. 2
SiouxperCon
 1201 N West Ave.
 Sioux Falls, SD

OCT. 1
Prairie Village Hobo Marlin Pumpkin Train
 45205 SD Highway 34
 Madison, SD
 605-256-3644

OCT. 1-2
Magic Needlers Quilt Festival
 Codington County Extension Complex, Watertown, SD
 605-881-3273

OCT. 7
The Pumpkin Patch
 Rapid Valley United Methodist Church, Rapid City, SD
 605-393-1526

OCT. 7-9
Great Scarecrow Festival
 Campbell Park
 Huron, SD
 605-353-8530

OCT. 7-9
Black Hills Powwow
 444 Mt. Rushmore Road
 Rapid City, SD
 605 341-0925

OCT. 7-8
Holman Acres Pumpkin Fest & Vender Show
 Philip, SD
 605-441-1060

OCT. 8-9
Crazy Horse Marathon & Races
 Crazy Horse Memorial
 12151 Avenue Of The Chiefs
 605-390-6137

OCT. 9
St. Boniface Church-Idylwilde Annual Fall Supper
 28703 444th Ave
 Freeman, SD
 605-660-2645

OCT. 15
Fall Festival
 18473 US Hwy 83, Onida, SD

OCT. 22
Ladies Day
 The Crossing Bar, Mina, SD
 605-390-2939

OCT. 28-30
ZooBoo
 Great Plains Zoo
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-367-7003

NOV. 3-5
Yankton's Harvest Halloween
 Downtown, Yankton, SD
 harvesthalloween.com

NOV. 3-5
Huron Ringneck Festival & Bird Dog Challenge
 100 4th Street SW, Huron, SD
 605-352-0000

NOV. 5-20
Rustic Designs & More Christmas Show
 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily
 Ethan, SD
 605-770-2411

NOV. 11-13
Christmas at the Barn
 Front Porch 605, Groton, SD
 605-216-4202

NOV. 12
Black Hills Meat Festival
 Black Hills Harley Davidson
 2820 Harley Dr., Rapid City, SD
 605-390-7917

NOV. 18-20
Deadwood's Big Whiskey Festival
 Deadwood, SD
 605-578-1876

DEC. 2-3
Christmas in the Hills
 Mueller Center, Hot Springs, SD
 605-745-4140

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