



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**RENVILLE-SIBLEY**  
MARCH 2025 VOL. 25 NO. 11

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## South Dakota 4-H Shooting

Shooters Prepare for  
the State Competition  
Pages 8-9

Wild Horses Roam at  
Black Hills Sanctuary  
Pages 12-13

Jackson Neprud, 4-H archer for Jones  
County, poses next to his target.



# Proposed Changes to Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws



**DeeAnne Norris**  
CEO  
320-826-2593 or  
800-826-2593

As mentioned in the last three newsletters, updating the address for our new facility provided an opportunity for the board and leadership team to propose broader changes to the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws.

The Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association Board of Directors and leadership team support all the proposed revisions to the Articles and By-Laws. These recommendations align with Minnesota Statute 308, which governs cooperative operations.

## MEMBERS WILL VOTE ON THE PROPOSED CHANGES IN MARCH 2025

We have provided a summary multiple times and are including the exact language for the additions to the By-Laws in this article in an attempt to provide a reasonable amount of time for members to consider the proposed changes prior to receiving the ballots in March on which members will make their wishes known.

These changes will be discussed at the 2025 Member Informational Meetings during the first week of March and presented for action by the membership alongside ballots for director elections. If you have questions or need clarification, please contact me directly. You are welcome to visit the office, call us at (800-826-2593), or email [dnorris@rscpa.coop](mailto:dnorris@rscpa.coop).

## Summary of Proposed Changes:

### *Address and Language Updates*

- Update the Cooperative's address to reflect the new facility location.
- Revise language for gender inclusivity, clarity, spelling, and consistency without altering the original intent of the Articles or By-Laws.
- Added clarity to the capital credit language by including "discount method (if any)" when describing capital credit retirements.

### *Directors and Officers*

- Allow the Board of Directors to remove a board member or officer for cause, with due process.
- Permit exceptions to meeting attendance rules by majority board vote.
- Increase educational requirements for serving as an officer on the board.

### *Annual Meeting Cancellation Due to Inclement Weather*

- Notify members promptly.
- The Board will decide at the next monthly meeting whether to reschedule within the year or combine business with the following year's meeting.
- Voting for directors and other matters will proceed via mail or electronic means, with a minimum 10-day extension for submitting votes.
- Results will be published via the Association website, newsletter, special mailings, or other electronic means.

### *Bad Debt Recovery from Capital Credits*

- Permit the use of unretired capital credit allocations to address bad debts.
- Apply the same discounted rate used for Estate Retirements when making adjustments.
- Include a "capital credit write-off" policy in Board Policy to ensure alignment with financial practices and accounting standards.

### *Arbitration Policy*

- Disputes unrelated to payment for electricity or services must be resolved through binding arbitration.
- For disputes over \$100,000, there will be three arbitrators; for disputes under \$100,000, one arbitrator will suffice.
- Arbitration will occur near Danube, Minnesota, per Minnesota's Uniform Arbitration Act (Chapter 572B).
- Costs of arbitration will be shared equally.
- All disputes must be arbitrated individually, not as part of a class action.
- Members agree to these arbitration terms by virtue of their membership, and this agreement survives membership withdrawal or termination.

A full marked-up version of the Articles and By-Laws with proposed changes is available on our website at [www.rscpa.coop/articles-incorporation-and-bylaws](http://www.rscpa.coop/articles-incorporation-and-bylaws). Or you may call the office to request a pdf version of a full marked up version with the proposed changes. The following is the exact language for additions to the By-Laws with notes from RSCPA in blue italics, if needed for further explanation:

## Arbitration (in Article I, Section 2)

Any and all disputes, claims or controversies arising from or related in any way to the Association's provision of electricity or other services, or in its furnishing of any goods, or in the conduct of its operations, other than disputes or claims relating to the payment for electrical energy and/or

other services provided by the Co-op, that are not resolved by agreement of the parties, shall, at the request of either party, be resolved by binding arbitration. In the event the arbitration involves a sum in excess of \$100,000, there shall be three (3) arbitrators, one picked by each party and a third selected by the two (2) arbitrators selected by the parties. In the event the dispute involves less than \$100,000, there shall be one (1) arbitrator. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the determination shall be made by the Minnesota District Court in Renville County, Minnesota.

The arbitration shall take place in Danube, Minnesota, or as close to this location as possible, under and pursuant to the rules contained in chapter 572B of Minnesota Statutes, the Uniform Arbitration Act. The determination of any dispute in arbitration shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota. The cost of the arbitrators and the filing fees shall be shared equally by the parties. All disputes between the parties must be arbitrated individually, and not through a Class Action. Each member of the Association, by virtue of their membership, agrees to arbitrate any and all claims or controversies according to these Bylaws, Association Policies, or other established rules prescribed by the Board of Directors. This agreement to arbitrate disputes shall survive any withdrawal from or termination of a Member's membership in the Association.

Arbitration language as recommended by the state association and insurance provider. RSCPA used language common in By-Laws from other electric distribution cooperatives in Minnesota.

**Removal of a Director by the Renville-Sibley Board of Directors (in Article I, Section 3)**

The Renville-Sibley Board of Directors shall have the power at any

regular monthly meeting or special meeting to remove any director or officer for cause and to fill the vacancy created thereby by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the existing Directors. The director or officer against whom such removal has been raised, shall be informed in writing of the reasons for removal previous to the meeting and shall have an opportunity at the meeting to be heard in person or by counsel and to present witnesses; and the Board of Directors shall have the same opportunity.

Removal of a Director is already allowed in the By-Laws but only by Membership. The addition allows a director to be removed by other directors, for cause, and with language to allow for reasonable notice and due process.

**Annual meeting cancelled due to inclement weather (in Article II, Section 1)**

In the event the annual meeting is cancelled due to inclement weather, the membership shall be informed as soon as practical. The board of Directors will take action at the next regularly scheduled monthly board meeting to determine whether to schedule the annual meeting for a future date within the same year, or to combine the business scheduled for the cancelled annual meeting at the following year's annual meeting. Voting for directors and other subjects brought to the membership for vote will still take place given the members may vote by mail or other electronic means. A minimum of ten (10) additional days will be provided to allow members to submit their vote by delivering it or mailing it to the Association Headquarters, or by some other approved electronic means. Results on director elections and any other topic brought to the membership for a vote shall be published on the Association website, and/or in the

Cont. Page 6

**COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS**

**RENVILLE-SIBLEY CO-OP POWER**

(USPS 019-074)

**Board of Directors**

- Roger Manthei - Chair
- Whitey Hinderman - Vice Chair
- Wayland Zaske - Secretary/Treasurer
- Jeff Boersma
- Gary Eekhoff
- Vicky Firl
- Alan Neyers
- Gary Peterson
- Helen Ruebel

**Renville-Sibley Employees**

- Gene Alex - Line Superintendent
- Brian Athmann - Journeyman Lineman
- Shawn Beckler - Crew Chief
- Mike Benson - Journeyman Lineman
- Brad Braulick - Crew Chief
- Nick Bruns - Technology Manager
- Anthony Carruth - Journeyman Lineman
- Amy Ervin - Executive Admin and HR
- Brayden Fischer - Journeyman Lineman
- Carren Frank - Cooperative Support Specialist
- DeeAnne Norris - CEO
- Clint Olson - Journeyman Lineman
- Marc Snyder - Cooperative Analyst
- Jill Woods - Member Services Professional

RENVILLE-SIBLEY COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association, 515 Highway 212 W, Danube, MN, 56230 for its members. Electric cooperative members devote 75 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Periodicals Postage Paid at Danube Post Office, Danube, MN 56230 and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Renville-Sibley Cooperative Connections, PO Box 68, Danube, MN 56230; Telephone (320) 826-2593; Toll Free 1-800-826-2593; Fax (320) 826-2679.

**Web site: [www.rscpa.coop](http://www.rscpa.coop)**

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

# Falls Are Preventable

March is Ladder Safety Month. Whether working from a ladder, roof or scaffolding, it's important to plan ahead, assess the risk and use the right equipment. First, determine if working from a height is absolutely necessary or if there is another way to do the task safely.

- Discuss the task with coworkers and determine what safety equipment is needed.
- Make sure you are properly trained on how to use the equipment.
- Scan the work area for potential hazards before starting the job.
- Make sure you have level ground to set up the equipment.
- If working outside, check the weather forecast; never work in inclement weather.
- Use the correct tool for the job, and use it as intended.
- Ensure stepladders have a locking device to hold the front and back open.
- Always keep two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand on the ladder.
- Place the ladder on a solid surface and never lean it against an unstable surface.
- A straight or extension ladder should be one foot away from the surface it rests on for every four feet of height and extend at least three feet over the top edge.
- Securely fasten straight and extension ladders to an upper support.
- Wear slip-resistant shoes and don't stand higher than the third rung from the top.
- Don't lean or reach while on a ladder, and have someone support the bottom.
- Never use old or damaged equipment; check thoroughly before use.



### Fall Hazards at Home

Are you a weekend warrior or do-it-yourselfer? If you take on home improvement or other weekend projects, it's important to prepare yourself for physical exertion, especially if you've been sedentary through the winter months, and take extra precautions to prevent falls.

Risky projects, like installing siding, gutters or roofs, are best left to professionals. Saving money isn't worth risking a debilitating or fatal fall.

At home or at work, many of the same rules apply. When taking on a project, remember the following.

- Practice all of the ladder safety tips mentioned to the left.
- Keep the work area clear of hazards and immediately clean up spills.
- Read all instructions and safety precautions on your equipment.
- Don't wear loose clothing that can get caught in equipment.

*Source: National Safety Council*



### "Don't cut trees near power lines."

#### Remington Welsh, Age 11

Remington warns readers to not cut trees around power lines. Thank you for your picture, Remington! Remington's parents are Ryan and Rachel Welsh, members of Black Hills Electric Cooperative.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.



# Hearty FAMILY MEALS

## EASY CREAMY HAMBURGER PASTA

### Ingredients:

1 lb. ground hamburger  
1 lb. cooked pasta  
5 oz. spinach  
1/4 cup butter  
2 cups heavy cream  
1 tbsp. minced garlic  
1 cup grated parmesan cheese

### Method

In a large pan, brown hamburger and minced garlic. Remove any excess grease. Turn heat to low and add the butter and heavy cream. Stir and simmer for a few minutes until the butter melts and it starts to boil. Stir in the spinach and cook for about three more minutes. Stir in the parmesan and cooked pasta. Enjoy!

**Lyndell Todd**  
Rapid City, S.D.

## MINI BBQ BACON CHEDDAR MEATLOAF

### Ingredients:

2 lbs. ground beef  
6 oz. chili sauce  
4 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled  
1 1/2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese  
1/2 cup panko breadcrumbs  
2 large eggs  
1 tsp. onion powder  
1 tsp. seasoned salt  
1 tsp. garlic powder  
2 tbsps. Worcestershire sauce  
1 tsp. yellow mustard  
1/2 cup BBQ sauce

### Method

Preheat oven to 425°F. Cook and crumble bacon. In a mixing bowl, mix together all meatloaf ingredients except the BBQ sauce. Divide the mixture into eight round loaves. Press a small depression into the middle of the meatloaves. Brush BBQ sauce on top of the meatloaves. Bake for 25 minutes. Turn on broiler and brown the BBQ sauce for two to five minutes.

**Kayla Beaner**  
Centerville, S.D.

## SKILLET CHICKEN POT PIE

### Ingredients:

1/4 cup butter  
1 cup chopped onion  
1/4 cup flour  
2 cups chicken stock  
1 cup milk  
1/2 cup apple cider  
1/2 tsp. garlic powder  
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1/2 tsp. whole thyme leaves  
1/4 tsp. black pepper  
2 cups cubed cooked chicken  
1 large sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 2 cups)  
1 cup frozen peas  
1 can (7.5 oz.) refrigerated biscuits, (10 biscuits)

### Method

Preheat oven to 450°F. Melt butter in large ovenproof nonstick skillet on medium-high heat. Add onion; cook and stir five minutes or until softened. Sprinkle with flour. Stir with whisk until mixture is well blended. Add stock, milk, apple cider, garlic powder, cinnamon, thyme and pepper; whisk until mixture is smooth.

Stir in chicken, sweet potatoes and peas. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook and stir 15 minutes or until sweet potatoes are tender.

Place biscuits on top of chicken mixture. Bake 10 minutes or until biscuits are golden brown.

**McCormick.com**

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2025. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

From Page 3

Association's newsletter, and/or by special mailing and/or other electronic means to the membership.

Language to allow for options, approved by the membership, in the event the annual meeting must be cancelled due to inclement weather.

Director Qualifications required for service (in Article III, Section 2)

Must attend at least three-fourths (3/4) of all monthly scheduled board meetings during any twelve (12) month period unless an exception is made by a majority vote of the Board upon the formal request of said director.

The addition of language in red allows the board to make an exception to the attendance requirements based on the specific situation, if necessary, upon the request of a director.

Option to recover bad debt by retiring allocated capital credits (in Article VII, Section 6)

The Association reserves the right to reduce or adjust allocated capital credits through a process referred to as a "capital credit write-off" when deemed necessary to address bad debt. This write-off or adjustment shall be applied at the same discounted rate used for Estate Retirements in accordance with the Association's financial policies and applicable accounting practices.

**THIS NOT THAT**

Easy Swaps to Go Green(er)

THIS (Green)	NOT THAT (Blue)
REUSABLE TOTE OR BAG	PLASTIC OR PAPER BAG
REUSABLE BOTTLE OR CUP	PLASTIC WATER BOTTLE
KITCHEN TOWEL	PAPER TOWEL
METAL STRAW	PLASTIC STRAW
REUSABLE CUTLERY	PLASTIC CUTLERY

Even if you are not removing water bottles from the ocean and recycling every shred of paper and plastic you use, there are easy ways to reduce waste, use less energy and help keep America beautiful.

Safe Electricity.org®

## Director Candidate Information

The following individuals are running for the Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association board of directors. More information from the candidates will be included with the ballot mailing. Candidates are listed by district.

### District 1: Whitey Hinderman (Incumbent)

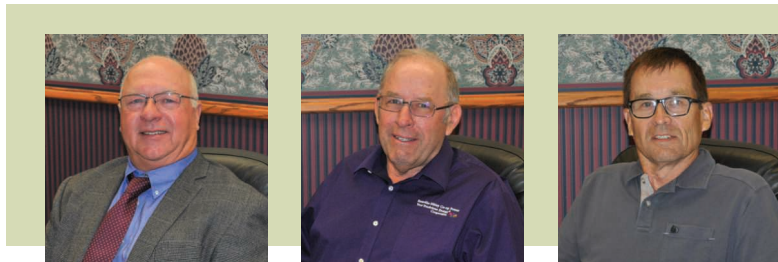
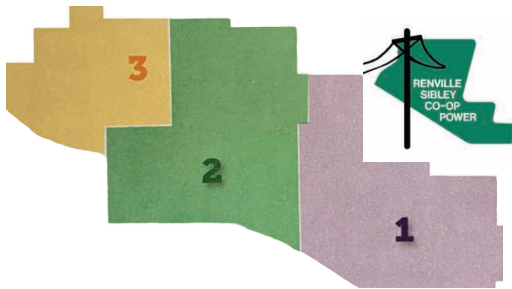
Townships of Cornish, Severance and Moltke in Sibley County; the Townships of Ridgely and West Newton in Nicollet County and the Townships of Cairo, Wellington, Martinsburg, Camp, Bandon and Palmyra in Renville County.

### District 2: Wayland Zaske (Incumbent)

Townships of Honner and Delhi in Redwood County and the Townships of Beaver Falls, Flora, Henryville, Birch Cooley, Norfolk, Melville, Bird Island and Kingman in Renville County.

### District 3: Gary Eekhoff (Incumbent)

Townships of Roseland and Holland in Kandiyohi County, the Township of Rheiderland in Chippewa County and the Townships of Troy, Winfield, Emmet, Crooks, Sacred Heart, Hawk Creek, Ericson and Wang in Renville County.



District 1 -  
Whitey Hinderman

District 2 -  
Wayland Zaske

District 3 -  
Gary Eekhoff

## Renville-Sibley Electric Co-op Director Achieves Credential in Today's Electric Utility Competencies

Vicky Firle, Director from Renville-Sibley's District 1, recently received the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). An ever-changing business environment has imposed new demands on electric cooperative directors, requiring increased knowledge of changes in the electric utility business, governance skills and a solid knowledge of the cooperative principles and business model.

Renville-Sibley along with other electric coops nation wide have a commitment to work through the NRECA CCD program to sharpen

this body of knowledge for the benefit of their electric cooperative consumer-owners. 699901

The NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) program required attendance and demonstrated understanding of the basic competencies contained in five core courses:

- Director Duties and Liabilities
- Understanding the Electric Business
- Board Operations and Process
- Strategic Planning
- Financial Decision Making

NRECA represents the

nation's almost 900 private, consumer-owned electric cooperatives, which provide electric service to more than 42 million people in 48 states. These electric cooperatives in total have over 7,200 directors.







West Central Electric CEO Jeff Birkeland, left, is the retired archery coach, and IT Coordinator Derek Wolf, right, is a first-year rifle coach for Jones County, South Dakota.

# SOUTH DAKOTA 4-H SHOOTING

## Shooters Prepare for the State Competition in April

Jocelyn Johnson  
jocelyn.johnson@sdrea.coop

Dedicated practice is the price each marksman pays to qualify and compete at the South Dakota 4-H Shooting Sports state event.



Sophie Wolf takes aim during a weekly practice.

This year, hundreds of shooters will compete on April 25-27 to showcase marksmanship. Their hard work will be on display as every shot will impact the final score. Among these competitors is a dedicated group from Jones County, South Dakota. For the past two decades, employees from West Central Electric Cooperative in Murdo, S.D., have dedicated their time to coaching various 4-H shooting disciplines.

“It’s the cooperative giving back to the community and promoting our youth,” said Jeff Birkeland, CEO of West Central Electric. “A few years ago, we took 41 kids to state, and we brought home 43 state trophies. I’m proud of our kids.”

Birkeland coached archery for 15 years and happily recounted the experience with his two boys during that time.

“Kids want to shoot. We have the best participation in shooting sports

than we have in anything else.”

Birkeland’s son, Jacob, competed for 10 years in shooting sports among other 4-H competitions.

“While I explored many aspects of 4-H, shooting sports became my primary focus,” Jacob said. “I began my journey in shooting sports with BB gun and was introduced to archery. Archery quickly became my main area of competition, and it has been an incredibly rewarding and impactful part of my 4-H experience.”

This experience offered him a competitive edge as well as bonding memories that Jacob vouches as life shaping.

“One of the greatest highlights of my time in 4-H has been the lasting friendships and memories I’ve built along the way,” Jacob said. “Whether it was constructing a trophy shelf with my grandpa, having archery competitions against my dad to see who had to do the chores or representing South Dakota at the national shooting sports event – each experience has contributed to my personal and professional growth. I would not be where I am today without it.”





Matthew Birkeland, left, stands with Hayzen Sealey, right, at the spring state competition.

Derek Wolf, IT coordinator for West Central Electric and first-year coach for Jones County 4-H, said, “We begin practicing once a week in January. We work on safety first – getting the kids comfortable with their firearms. Then, we step into practicing for competition.”

Each county competes in three matches leading up the state competition, and every participant must make a qualifying score in at least one match to qualify for state.

“We encourage every kid to enter and compete in all three matches,” Birkeland said. “It’s better to practice at it instead of getting to state and having the wheels fall off.”

The art of practicing perfectly is what brings these competitors to state. Birkeland noted that those who practice, will win. And those who overcome a disappointment may come home with the trophy.

“It teaches those kids a lot about life,” Birkeland said. “You practice and practice, you put the time in and then one thing happens – one flinch,

one mistake and it’s over. Emotionally, hopefully it strengthens them a bit. Instead of breaking down and crying, you better be able to handle it...Limit your problems. Don’t increase them with a mental meltdown.”

Wolf agreed with this sentiment and described how overcoming a bad shot and being mentally tough is sometimes more important than being a skilled shooter.

“There are a lot of kids who find success in this, so I find it rewarding to be involved as a coach,” he said.

Wolf’s daughter, Sophie, competes in .22 rifle and archery and remarked that the highlight of the competition was that it challenged her and made her a stronger competitor. She trains twice per week for several hours while preparing for the state competition.

“I feel excitement when I compete,” Sophie said. “I love the challenge.”

In 2024, more than 1,600 participants competed in various disciplines at the spring state shooting event. These disciplines

are pistol, archery, rifle, hunting and western heritage. An additional 270 participants competed in the fall state shooting event for shotgun and muzzleloading. Each year, the top five shooters win trophies and this year’s winners may be chosen to represent at the 4-H Shooting Sports National Championships in Grand Island, Neb., on June 22-27. Last year, South Dakota tied for 2nd place with Missouri at the national event.

John Keimig, South Dakota State University Extension Youth Safety Field Specialist, emphasized that the shooting program is made great by the people who volunteer.

“One of the great things about small communities in South Dakota is people who give their time to volunteer,” said Keimig. “If it wasn’t for people who volunteer, we wouldn’t have this successful program – whether it be volunteers who work full-time for an electric cooperative or farmers and ranchers. They are the backbone of this program.”



Archers stand on the line at South Dakota’s spring state competition.

# Minnesota Rural Electric Cooperative Leaders Advocate in Washington, D.C.

Vicky Firle

On Jan 28 and 29, the Minnesota Rural Electric Association led a delegation of 16 rural electric cooperative leaders from across Minnesota at work in Washington, D.C. We met with all 10 offices of Minnesota’s federal congressional delegation. We advocated for policies that will help cooperatives ensure reliable, affordable power for our communities in today’s rapidly changing and challenging landscape.

A key focus of our discussions was emphasizing the importance of USDA’s New ERA (Empowering Rural America) program to Minnesota’s cooperatives. Cooperatives across the state received awards under this highly competitive program, which will be instrumental in Minnesota cooperatives developing new generation resources and strengthen our power grid. Every distribution cooperative in Minnesota will benefit from these awards. As we work to comply with Minnesota’s carbon-free by 2040 law, we emphasized that additional generation resources are needed to maintain reliability and affordability, and that projects supported by New ERA will play a vital role in meeting these challenges. We want to ensure this program continues into the new Administration and the new Congress. We expressed appreciation for past support of cooperatives through this



program and listened to perspectives on working together as they move forward.

We discussed additional cooperative priorities, including the status of the Farm Bill negotiations, and cooperative programs included in that bill.

Our meetings were productive.

We once again found Minnesota’s congressional delegation engaged and supportive of our work. As we move forward, we will continue advocating for policies that support the long-term success of our cooperatives and the communities we serve.

## Notice:

The January board meeting was not held this year. The board meeting highlights will return to the newsletter after the February meeting.

The February board meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 25th, 2025 at 8 a.m.

The March board meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 25th, 2025 at 8 a.m.

The ANNUAL MEETING will be held on Thursday, March 27th, 2025 at 6 p.m. at Redwood Community Center. See page 11 for the Annual Meeting notice.



# Annual Meeting Notice

The 87th Annual Meeting of Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association will be held on Thursday, March 27, 2025, at the Redwood Area Community Center in Redwood Falls. The meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. The meeting is being called in accordance with the bylaws of the association to transact the following business:

1. Report of officers, directors and committees
2. Election of three (3) directors, one (1) from District 1, one (1) from District 2 and one (1) from District 3
3. Any other business which may properly come before the meeting

Voting ballots for director election, including candidate information, will be mailed to all members

around March 7. Also included in the mailing will be voting ballots for proposed changes to the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws.

If you cannot attend and you wish to mail your ballot, you may do so. However, if mailed, it must be received through the mail by March 26th, 2025.

Drawings for the early bird prizes will begin at 5:45 p.m. Drawings will also be held at the close of the annual meeting. Children in attendance will be eligible for prize drawings.

A \$15 energy credit attendance prize will be given to members (one credit per member) who attend the annual meeting. All members are encouraged to attend the 87th annual meeting of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.

Wayland Zaske, Secretary

## FOR SALE:

Grass fed, grass finished beef. Burger-Individual cuts-Quarters-Halves when available. Call for pricing.

Dave Pastoors  
Olivia, MN 56277  
320-522-4851

Wood Pile – Various Lengths  
Jerome Jahnke  
Redwood Falls, MN 56283  
507-640-1092

Used washer for sale (just upgrading). Asking \$50.

Darrel Hanson  
Sacred Heart, MN 56285  
326-979-3858

## NOTICE

Candidate information for each district will be included with the ballots mailed in March. Additional ballots for Article and By-Laws updates will also be included.

## OUTAGE REPORT:

*Affecting 10 members or more*

**Date:** 12-09-25  
**Time off:** 10:30 AM  
**Time on:** 11:54 AM  
**Substation:** Crooks  
**Cause:** Equipment Failure

Please contact Renville-Sibley's office for more details about these power outages.

ANNUAL MEETING

SAVE THE DATE

MARCH 27, 2025  
@ 6 P.M.

Renville-Sibley's 87th Annual Meeting will be held on March 27, 2025, at the Redwood Area Community Center in Redwood Falls. Early Bird Prizes begin at 5:45 p.m. A meal will be served following the meeting.



# RUNNING FREE

Photos by Alvis Uptis

## Wild Horses Roam at Black Hills Sanctuary

**Jacob Boyko**

[jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop](mailto:jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop)

In the southern Black Hills, a watchful eye will catch a rare and breathtaking sight: a herd of wild mustangs galloping freely across thousands of acres of grassland in the Cheyenne River Valley.

For the Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary staff and the hundreds of rescued horses they care for, it's just another day on the ranch.

The sanctuary operates like most working ranches, says Susan Watt, the president and CEO of the Institute of Range and the American Mustang. Staff regularly travel over 15 miles across the 10,000 acre ranch to fill water troughs and set out hay, mineral blocks and horse cake. It's a trek that takes them across picturesque grasslands, hills, bluffs and the muddy banks of the Cheyenne River. A bulwark against suburban sprawl, the land remains as nature intended.

"Wild horses have been part of North America since time immemorial," Watt explained. "We have a large population of American mustangs, Spanish mustangs, horses with blood lines that trace back to Spain and Portugal, and a small herd of Choctaw Indian ponies that were part of the Trail of Tears

– They are a very important part of American history we need to preserve."

The story of the sanctuary begins in the late 1930s with a young man named Dayton Hyde. At 13 years old, Hyde left his home in Michigan for his uncle's cattle ranch in Oregon after hearing captivating tales of the wild west's excitement and beauty.

Once he arrived, Hyde was completely enthralled by the western lifestyle. With each passing year, his connection to the land and the wildlife strengthened, shaping his identity as a cowboy, conservationist and writer.

Decades later in 1987, while on a trip to Nevada to purchase cattle, Hyde came across corrals of wild horses the federal government had rounded up using low-flying helicopters. Devastated by the idea of the free-roaming herds confined to pens, Hyde was inspired to create a refuge for wild horses where they could run free.

Hyde petitioned congress to allow him to take some of the captured horses and create a sanctuary. South Dakota Governor George Mickelson, who had learned of Hyde's ambitions and was supportive, invited Hyde to inspect a piece of land known as Chilson Canyon near Hot Springs, S.D.

For nearly 40 years now, that piece of land plus Hyde's hard work has given hundreds of wild horses another chance to roam wild. However, it's a luxury very few wild horses receive.

Since 2020, the Bureau of Land Management has reported



# WILD HORSE SANCTUARY

rounding up over 40,000 wild horses to control herd populations, which can grow rapidly in the wild. Their fates vary; At government holding pens, they await auction where if sold they'll be rehomed with owners who agree not to sell them for slaughter outside of the U.S.

According to Watt and other wild horse advocacy groups, those assurances don't always matter.

"The horses are supposed to be protected from slaughter," she continued, "But unfortunately, you put them in a trailer and cross the border into Canada or Mexico and they don't always check to see what's in the trailer."

The horses that come to the sanctuary are generally in "emergency situations," Watt said, which means the horses are being sent to slaughter or their previous caretaker died or is unable to take care of the horses.

In addition to preserving the herds of wild horses, Hyde envisioned the sanctuary as a means to protect and preserve the land's natural beauty and rich historical legacy, which includes long-ago remnants of human activity.

"This particular tract of land was the location for ancient petroglyph writings that ancient man did on cliff walls," Watt explained. "And we're protecting the pioneer history of this land; Our buildings that we use are pioneer homesteads."

Though Dayton Hyde passed away in 2018, his legacy lives on. Today the sanctuary is home to several hundred wild horses, a herd of cattle, thousands of acres of pristine prairie

and the inextinguishable spirit of the wild west.

"He used to say every ache and pain he ever had was from a horse," Watt laughed. "What Dayton Hyde really wanted was to protect this land from subdivision, to let it be for wildlife and wild horses, and keep it safe and protected. I think South Dakota should be immensely proud of what Dayton Hyde has done."

For more information about the Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary, visit [www.wildmustangs.com](http://www.wildmustangs.com).



(Above) Dayton Hyde, founder of the sanctuary.  
(Below) The sanctuary encompasses more than 10,000 acres of land along the Cheyenne River near Hot Springs, S.D.  
*Photos by Alvis Uptis*



## Operation Round Up

At the January Operation Round Up board meeting, the Board of Trustees awarded three (3) donations to local non-profit organizations. A \$1,000 donation was given to the Danube Area Athletic Club towards the purchase of a snow blower for the hockey rink. Donations of \$500 each were given to RCW Post Prom and BOLD Post Prom to support after prom activities.

If your non-profit organization has a project or event that would benefit the community, Operation Round Up funds may be available to help your group reach its goal. The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on April 16, 2025. The deadline for applications is April 1.

Applications for donations can be found at <https://rscpa.coop/operation-round>. Contact the office at 320-826-2593 for more information.

## Comparative Report

	Current YTD	One Year Ago YTD	10 Years Ago YTD
<b>Average # of Consumers</b>	1,882	1,879	1,914
<b>kWhs purchased</b>	19,324,657	18,806,812	20,691,025
<b>Cost of purchased power</b>	\$1,222,163.52	\$1,139,123.41	\$1,133,145.62

## FREE Want Ad Service

Members can submit ads for the following categories: Giveaway, For Sale, For Rent, and Wanted. Ads should be or are limited to no more than 15 words and must be received by the first of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter. Renville-Sibley reserves the right to edit content or exclude ads due to space restrictions. Ads will be run one time only unless resubmitted. Please complete the following information and mail it to the Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power, PO Box 68, Danube, MN 56230.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Ad to be placed (limit of 15 words per ad)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Type of ad:  Giveaway  For Sale  For Rent  Wanted

## WHERE'S THE NUMBER?

Last month's RSCPA member did not find their member number in the newsletter. The value of the energy credit will be increased to \$45. Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by the 3rd of March, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

## REMINDER

Renville-Sibley encourages any member planning on making changes to their service in 2025 to please contact the office as soon as possible. In order to complete these projects on time, material may need to be ordered well in advance as often there is extended lead time to get the appropriate material. In addition, crew time will be scheduled in the order projects and materials are received.

## OPERATION ROUND UP THANK YOU

Dear Donors,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your generosity in donating to our After Prom Fundraiser. Your generous donation helps us create a safe and fun event for the BOLD Prom attendees. We truly appreciate your continued support.

Sincerely,  
BOLD After Prom Paren Committee  
and Junior Class Participants



## Scholar of the Month

Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association, your Touchstone Energy Cooperative, congratulates Lindsay Lopez on being selected as the January Scholar of the Month. Lindsay, currently a senior at RCW, was nominated because she exemplifies the qualities of integrity, accountability, innovation, commitment, and a deep dedication to community service. She works efficiently, without requiring much direction, and maintains a strong focus on the task at hand. Her ability to quickly adapt and contribute to progress is a testament to her strong work ethic and sense of responsibility. Throughout her high school career, Lindsay has not only excelled academically but has also made a significant impact on her community. She is an outstanding student, an innovative thinker, and a



dedicated volunteer. Renville-Sibley Co-op Power salutes Lindsay Lopez as the January Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Month!

## Mission Statement

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association will provide safe, efficient, reliable electric energy and services to enhance the quality of rural living.

## Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## Member Informational Meetings

Each year, Renville-Sibley holds Member Informational Meetings throughout the service area. These meetings are held on various days and times with the hope that if one day or time doesn't work for a member, another day or time might. All members are encouraged to attend these meetings to learn more about Renville-Sibley and the electric industry. This year, the schedule is as follows:

**March 1, 2025 @ 9:30 a.m. – Saturday – Danube, RSCPA Boardroom**

**March 3, 2025 @ 9:30 a.m. – Monday – Fairfax Community Center**

**March 4, 2025 @ 6:30 p.m. – Tuesday – Redwood Community Center**

**March 6, 2025 @ 1:30 p.m. – Thursday – Sacred Heart Community Center**

A light snack will be provided at each of the meetings. We look forward to seeing you at the Member Informational Meetings in March



**MARCH 14-15**  
**St. Patrick's Day**  
**Weekened**  
 Fri. 5 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.  
 Deadwood, SD  
 605-578-1876

*Photo courtesy of  
 Travel South Dakota*

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.

**FEB. 28-MARCH 1**  
**Mardi Gras Weekend**  
 8 p.m. Fri.-10 p.m. Sat.  
 Main Street  
 Deadwood, SD  
 605-578-1876

**MARCH 6**  
**SD Jazz Festival Concert**  
 Aberdeen Community Concert  
 Association  
 7:30 p.m.  
 NSU Johnson Fine Arts Center  
 Aberdeen, SD  
 Tickets Available at Concert

**MARCH 8-9**  
**Philip Area Annual Gun Show**  
 Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
 Sun. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
 American Legion Hall  
 Philip, SD  
 605-859-2135

**MARCH 8**  
**Epiphany Sausage Sale**  
 10 a.m. until gone  
 Parish Hall  
 Epiphany, SD

**MARCH 8**  
**Minnehaha County**  
**Pheasants Forever Banquet**  
 5 p.m.  
 El Riad Shrine  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-376-8219

**MARCH 14-15**  
**Badlands Quilter Weekend**  
**Getaway**  
 Fri. 5 p.m.  
 Sat. 8 a.m.  
 Community Center  
 Wall, SD  
 605-685-5718

**MARCH 15**  
**VFW Teener Baseball Bingo**  
**Benefit**  
 5 p.m.  
 Tyndall Auditorium  
 Tyndall, SD

**MARCH 22**  
**Annual Banquet & Bash**  
 Britton Area Chamber of  
 Commerce  
 5:30 p.m.  
 Britton, SD  
 605-448-8130

**MARCH 26**  
**Hill City Garden Club**  
**Trip to Central Asia**  
 1 p.m.  
 Kathryn Cleveland  
 Hill City Super 8  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 29**  
**Ready. Set. Grow!**  
 9 a.m.-12 p.m.  
 Couteau Prairie Master Gardeners  
 Codrington CTY Extension Complex  
 Watertown, SD  
 605-838-7098

**APRIL 4**  
**Mitchell Technical College**  
**2025 Alumni Gathering**  
**Cornhole Tournament**  
 5 p.m. Social  
 6:30 p.m. Tournament  
 The World's Only Corn Palace  
 Mitchell, SD  
 605-995-7342

**APRIL 4-5**  
**Annual Schmeckfest**  
 German Heritage Celebration  
 748 S Main St.  
 Freeman, SD  
 605-925-4237

**APRIL 4-6, 11-13**  
**Women Playing Hamlet**  
 April 4-5, 11-12: 7:30 p.m.  
 April 6, 13: 2:30 p.m.  
 Mighty Corson Art Players  
 Corson, SD  
 www.mightycorson.com

**APRIL 5-6**  
**Youth & Family Kids Fair**  
 Sat. 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.  
 Sun. 12-4p.m.  
 The Monument  
 Rapid City, SD  
 605-342-4195

**APRIL 11-12**  
**Junkin' Market Days Spring**  
**Market**  
 Fri. 4-7 p.m.  
 Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.  
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 www.junkinmarketdays.com

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