

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Wings of Valor

A Veteran's Hunting
Retreat

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Celebrating American
Indian Heritage

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Electric Co-ops Grow for the Communities They Serve

October is National Co-op Month



Amy Ervin
Member and
Board Services
Representative

October is National Co-op Month, and Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association is joining cooperatives across the U.S. to celebrate. Co-ops come in all shapes and sizes, but they each have a common goal: to provide goods or services for the members of the co-op.

Electric co-ops, including Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association, exist to serve their members. Our priority is to provide affordable, reliable energy to our local communities. Because we are led by

you, the members we serve, we can evolve to meet your needs.

This October, as we celebrate Co-op Month, we're focusing on the ways "Co-ops Grow" for their members. 716800

Co-ops Grow Communities: Co-ops help communities grow by promoting economic empowerment, fostering community engagement, and supporting the unique needs of co-op members. "Concern for Community" is one of our core principles—and being community-focused is essential to everything we do.

Co-ops Grow Together: Co-ops are all about cooperation, not competition. That's why electric co-ops work together to share lessons learned, successful strategies, and better ways to serve our members. We're better when we grow together!

Co-ops Grow Tomorrow's Leaders: Electric co-ops serve as fertile ground for growing tomorrow's leaders through a variety of youth engagement programs. Whether through school demonstrations, community events, or the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program, we're committed to providing opportunities for local youth to learn and thrive in our community and beyond.

Co-ops Grow for You: At Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association your satisfaction is our number one goal. It's why we were formed many years ago to fulfill a uniquely local purpose. We've come a long way since then, and your needs continue to evolve. That's why we'll never stop growing for you!



Jay York Scholarship Winner

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association would like to congratulate Cora Watson, daughter of Eric and Danielle Watson, on being selected for the Jay York Scholarship. Renville-Sibley is one of the many cooperatives that participate in the scholarship in honor of Jay York. This scholarship is made available to dependents of Renville-Sibley members.

The Jay A. York Scholarship was established in 1994 by Minnesota's electric cooperatives in recognition of Jay A. York. Mr. York was the first Minnesotan to head the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and was a prominent figure in rural electric cooperative issues for nearly 30 years. Mr. York was not only well-known for his great leadership ability but also great dignity, a deep understanding of the issues, and an unyielding dedication to his fellow rural Americans. He was chairman



Jay York Scholarship Winner,
Cora Watson.

and director for Nobles Cooperative Electric in Worthington, Minnesota.

Congratulations, Cora!

Renville Sibley Welcomes New Board Member

Due to a recent vacancy on our Board of Directors, Vicky Firlle is now serving our members in District 1 effective the October board meeting.

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 Firlle
Alan Neyers
Gary Peterson
Helen Ruebel

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Brian Athmann – Journeyman Lineman
Shawn Beckler – Crew Chief
Mike Benson – Journeyman Lineman
Brad Braulick – Crew Chief
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Anthony Carruth – Journeyman Lineman
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Brayden Fischer – Journeyman Lineman
DeeAnne Norris – CEO
Cali Olson – Cooperative Support Specialist
Clint Olson – Journeyman Lineman
Kathy Ridl – Accounting Clerk
Shane Suess – PT Janitor

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Drowsy Driving

Drowsy Driving Prevention Week (Nov. 5-11, 2023), held every year during the first full week of November, is a good time to remember that drowsy driving is impaired driving.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 1 in 25 adult drivers report having fallen asleep while driving in the previous 30 days, and many more admit to driving when they were sleep-deprived.

These startling figures show how prevalent drowsy driving is. What drivers may not realize is how much drowsy driving puts themselves – and others – at risk. In fact, an estimated 6,400 people died annually in crashes involving drowsy driving, according to the National Sleep Foundation.

Impact of Drowsiness on Driving

Driving while drowsy is similar to driving under influence of alcohol.

- Drivers' reaction times, awareness of hazards and ability to sustain attention all worsen the drowsier the driver.
- Driving after going more than 20 hours without sleep is the equivalent of driving with a blood-alcohol concentration of 0.08% – the U.S. legal limit.
- You are three times more likely to be in a car crash if you are fatigued.

A driver might not even know when he or she is fatigued because signs of fatigue are hard to identify. Some people may also experience micro-sleep – short, involuntary periods of inattention. In the 4 or 5 seconds a driver experiences micro-sleep, at highway speed, the vehicle will travel the length of a football field.

Prevalence of Drowsy Driving Crashes

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that every year about 100,000 police-reported, drowsy-driving crashes result in nearly 800 fatalities and about 50,000 injuries. The real number may be much higher, however, as it is difficult to determine whether a driver was drowsy at the time of a crash.

A study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety estimated that 328,000 drowsy driving crashes occur annually. That's more than three times the police-reported number. The same study found that 109,000 of those drowsy driving crashes resulted in an injury and about 6,400 were fatal. The researchers suggest the prevalence of drowsy driving fatalities is more than 350% greater than reported.

Beyond the human toll is the economic one. NHTSA estimates fatigue-related crashes resulting in injury or death cost society \$109 billion annually, not including property damage.

Interventions for Drowsy Driving

Drowsy driving affects everyone, including adolescents and teens, who are not getting enough sleep (according to the CDC, it is recommended that teens get 8-10 hours of sleep each night). That means interventions focusing on this age group can help reduce drowsy

driving. One such intervention is for parents to incorporate discussions and rules on drowsy driving while completing their parent-teen driving agreements.

Other ways to reduce drowsy driving include:

- **Crash avoidance technologies:** New and existing safety technologies, such as drowsiness alert and lane departure warnings, can detect common drowsy driving patterns and warn drivers to stay in their lane or take a break
- **University interventions:** College students receive less than average sleep, with some estimates at less than six hours a night; education programs aimed at college students may help curb drowsy driving and instill healthier behaviors that can last into adulthood
- **Getting more sleep:** According to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the Sleep Research Society, adults should get seven or more hours of sleep each night
- **Medication labels:** An article by Consumer Reports found that side-effect warnings are not always clear; new labeling guidelines may help drivers understand when to drive or not drive after taking these medications
- **Employers:** Workplaces with strong off-the-job safety and health programs can include key information on getting sufficient sleep and refraining from driving drowsy

Source: National Safety Council



Don't Fly Kites Near Power Lines!

Jason Willman, Age 9

Jason Willman advises people it's not safe to fly kites around power lines. Jason is the son of Dave and April Willman from Yankton, S.D., members of Clay-Union Electric Corporation.

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.

EASY CROCKPOT CREATIONS

MOM'S ROAST

Ingredients:

3-5 lbs. beef roast
1 can beefy mushroom soup
1 pkg. au jus (dry)

Method

Place roast in crock pot at bedtime. Mix au jus and soup together and pour over the roast. Cook on low. Roast will be ready to serve in its own gravy for dinner tomorrow.

Elaine Rieck
Harrisburg, S.D.

CREAMY GARDEN ROTINI

Ingredients:

1 lb. cooked and drained sausage or beef
1 large can (26 oz.) cream of chicken soup
1 soup can of milk
1 can (14.5 oz.) chicken broth soup
1 tbsp. Italian seasoning
1 cup fresh mushrooms
6 cups fresh spinach
1 pkg. Garden Rotini

Method

Add ingredients in the order given to the instant pot. Pressure cook on high for 20 minutes. Allow pressure to reduce to normal for 10 minutes, then serve! You will need an instant pot for this recipe!

Jean Cave
Sioux Falls, S.D.

CROCKPOT CASHEW CHICKEN

Ingredients:

1 pkg. slow cookers limited edition cashew chicken seasoning
2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken thighs, cubed
1 cup frozen chopped onion and pepper blend
1/3 cup water
3 tbsps. soy sauce
2 tbsps. ketchup
1 cup cashew pieces
2 green onions, finely chopped

Method

Place chicken and vegetables in slow cooker. Mix seasoning, water, soy sauce, and ketchup in bowl until well blended. Pour over chicken and vegetables; stir to coat. Cover. Cook eight hours on low or four hours on high. Stir in cashews. Sprinkle with green onions. Serve over cooked rice, if desired. If cooking on low, decrease water to 1/4 cup.

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 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Help us by keeping your meter neat(er)

Winter weather is here and that means a chance of heavy snow or ice. Please help Renville-Sibley by keeping your electric meter easily accessible and free from snow, ice, or debris. We need to access your meter from time to time to service or inspect it, and in some cases, to read it, depending on the type of meter.



Accumulated ice and snow not only make it difficult for utility crews to access meters, but the added weight can also strain them. Snow and ice buildup can also be dangerous since it could cause a gas leak.

Clearing meters

Heavy snow and icicles are not a meter's friend. After you have finished shoveling or snow-blowing your driveway and sidewalk, take a broom or use your hands to gently brush the snow from your electric and gas meters. If there is thick ice on your meter that will not easily come off with a brush or your hands, call Renville-Sibley at 800-826-2593. Please do not try to kick off the ice or chisel it with a snow shovel or sharp object since this could damage the meter.

Other tips

Other meter safety/utility equipment tips include:

- Do not cover meters or pipes with shoveled or blown snow.
- Carefully remove overhead icicles from eaves and gutters so that

dripping water does not freeze, fall on, or damage meters or pipes.

- Do not use a shovel or a sharp object to remove snow and ice from meters.
- Do not kick your gas meter, as this can cause damage that could cause a gas leak.
- Do not kick your electric meter, as this could cause damage.
- Keeping gas meters and vents clear allows for proper ventilation and can prevent deadly carbon monoxide buildup in your home.
- Never try to remove ice from an overhead power line.
- If there is a downed power line, do not approach it or try to move it; instead, stay away and call 9-1-1 or Renville-Sibley to report it.
- Be aware that snow, ice, and standing water can cover downed power lines.

Pave the way

In addition, it is always a good idea to clear a path to your meter. Thank you in advance for keeping your meters clear and accessible.

To learn other electrical safety tips, visit SafeElectricity.org.

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Are You Interested in a New Adventure?

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association is beginning to plan for the 86th Annual meeting of the membership that will be held on March 26, 2024 at the Redwood Area Community Center in Redwood Falls, Minnesota. Three (3) directors will be elected during that time, each for a 3-year term.

The First District, consisting of the 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 is represented by Alan Neyers, Whitey Hinderman and Vicky Firl. Alan Neyer's term will expire in 2024.

The Second District, consisting of the 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 is represented by Helen Ruebel, Wayland Zaske and Jeff Boersma. Helen Ruebel's term will expire in 2024.

The Third District, consisting of the townships of Roseland and Holland in Kandiyohi County; Rheiderland in Chippewa County the townships of Troy, Winfield, Emmet, Crooks, Sacred Heart, Hawk Creek, Ericson and Wang in Renville County is represented by Gary Eekhoff, Gary Peterson and Roger Manthei. Gary Peterson's term will expire in 2024.

As stated in the Renville-Sibley by-laws, the following is the Qualifications and Tenure for the position of Director:

Each director shall be a member of the Cooperative and shall be elected by the members within their respective district at the annual meeting of the members for a term of three years. No member shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who is not a bona fide resident in the area served by the Cooperative, or who is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or space heating/cooling appliances, fixtures, or supplies to the members. When a membership is held jointly by two or more persons, including husband and wife, only one of such joint tenants may be elected a director, provided, however, that neither one shall be eligible to become a director, unless all shall meet the qualifications herein set forth.

Director qualifications required for service to the cooperative shall include:

- A. Must be an individual and must be at least 18 years of age.
- B. Must be competent and able to execute a contract.
- C. Must not have been convicted of a felony or gross misdemeanor during the preceding 5 years prior to becoming a director for the Cooperative or during the period while serving as a director.
- D. Must have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- E. Must make a reasonable effort to become and remain knowledgeable about special issues regarding electric cooperatives by attending training, workshops and seminars.
- F. Must attend at least three-fourths (3/4) of all monthly scheduled board meetings during any twelve (12) month period.

Upon becoming a candidate for and/or to remain a Director, an individual must complete an annual conflict of interest disclosure form, approved by the Board of Directors. All Directors and/or Director candidates must comply with or meet the following conflict of interest qualifications:

- A. Shall not be a close relative of an existing Director, employee, agent or representative of the Cooperative other than an existing Director who will cease being a Director upon the candidate assuming office;
- B. Within 5 years immediately prior to becoming a Director, shall not

have been a Cooperative Officer, employee, agent or representative of the Cooperative or any subsidiary or affiliated company;

C. Shall not be employed by, materially affiliated with, nor share a material financial interest with any current Director;

D. Shall not be engaged in any business, nor employed by, nor materially affiliated with, nor have a material financial interest in any individual or entity that:

1. Is regularly, directly, and substantially competing with the Cooperative or any other entity that the Cooperative controls or in which the Cooperative owns a majority interest (Cooperative Subsidiary).
2. Is regularly selling goods and services to the Cooperative or the Cooperative Subsidiary.
3. Possesses a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative or the Cooperative subsidiary.

E. A former Director is ineligible for employment by the Cooperative for 5 years following the end of the tenure as a Director.

As a Director, the member agrees to:

- o Abide by, promote and uphold the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws, both of which can be found on our website, and Policies of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.
- o Attend regular and special Board meetings of the Cooperative.
- o Attend, when appointed, committee meetings of the Cooperative.

If anyone should decide to seek candidacy for the board of directors, there are many rewards to be enjoyed when elected. A director has the opportunity to demonstrate their leadership quality and increase their knowledge within the cooperative business environment and the electric industry. As a director, this person could play a significant role in the future development of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.

A director also has a very important responsibility which is to uphold and abide by the bylaws of the cooperative. Directors are to act as the trustees for the assets of the cooperative and are assigned the duties of formulating, approving and reviewing the policies that provide guidelines for the cooperative.

The board is responsible for sending representatives to the affiliated association meetings that often include voting requirements. They include East River Electric Power Cooperative, Minnesota Rural Electric Association, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, National Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, CoBank, Cooperative Network and the National Rural Electric Association.

Directors attend seminars and meetings of several organizations to learn about the industry. Directors are asked to lobby and remain informed on legislative issues that could impact this industry and/or the cooperative way of doing business. The Board meets monthly and reviews financial reports, work plans, annual audits, planning documents and evaluates the cooperative operations while approving budgets and purchases.

Most of all, a director should be available to visit with their constituents and have a genuine spirit of helping others at all times.

Board meetings are typically held on the fourth Tuesday of every month, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in December, January and February and beginning at 8:00 a.m. the rest of the year. Board meetings will be held in person or via Zoom. The estimated time needed to be committed annually is approximately 30 days which includes monthly meetings and committee assignments. Directors are compensated per diem for their time as well as all personal expenses.

If you are interested in becoming a candidate for the Renville-Sibley Board of Directors, contact the Renville-Sibley office at 1-800-826-2593 before January 2nd for further information.



Veterans enjoying their stay at Wings of Valor.

WINGS OF VALOR

A Veteran's Retreat

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

Wings of Valor Lodge isn't just a hunting retreat offering veterans a good time and a free pheasant hunt, it's a place for them to come home.

The non-profit organization offers all U.S. military veterans an all-expense paid hunt in the heart of pheasant country, about five miles south of Parker, South Dakota.

The organization runs almost entirely on volunteers, donations and sponsorships and has already served more than 500 veterans from over 40 states since it began operations in 2019.

Sean Adams, the organization's president and co-founder, said the idea to open a hunting lodge came after discussions with the organization's now-CEO Bruce Weller back in 2018.

Weller owned a private hunting lodge called Birds, Bucks and Berries, and was host to Adams and other veterans during his annual veterans' hunt.

"Bruce was saying how the veterans' hunt was always the best day of the year, so I said, we can make every day the best day of the year if you want," said Adams.

Adams, who was grievously injured while serving in Afghanistan resulting in a double amputation of his legs in 2012, said he was well-versed in the non-profit community by the time he and Weller began discussing opening a hunting lodge that served veterans.

"I know pretty much how it works. If you do what you say, do it on time, do it well, serve veterans with a level of professionalism, and have a little faith, people will come," Adams said.

"From that conversation to Nov. 1, 2019, we worked on build site plans that I designed with one of the volunteers. We took a pavilion area that (Weller) used for weddings and put chalk lines everywhere, which is how we mapped out a building plan."

Adams said he rolled his wheelchair around each room, and if he hit a chalk line, he'd remark the line to ensure it was handicap accessible. That was in



Above: CPL USMC (RET) Sean Adams

Right: Sean Adams recovers in a hospital after suffering serious injuries in an IED explosion in Afghanistan in 2011.



January of 2019. Eleven months later, the lodge had been built and a group of veterans came to hunt under the newly established Wings of Valor Lodge.

Adams said a premise of Wings of Valor Lodge is to welcome veterans' home to something that's not chaotic, a place where they can find purpose and peace.

There's no religious angle, nor any requirements other than having taken the oath to serve our country for a veteran to have their travel expenses and entire hunting trip paid for by the non-profit.

"My generation fought in a war that was religious based," Adams explained. "We do have a spiritual setting, but we don't press anything. We never want a veteran to feel that they are oppressed by any sort of a faith."

Whether a veteran is religious, Christian, Muslim, atheist, or simply spiritual, they will be amongst others who understand what they've been through.

"No veteran is broken, they just need to come home," Adams said.

"God did not call the qualified, he called the unqualified that were willing to do

whatever was asked. Don't think because you did something overseas that your any worse than the pastor in the pulpit. We're all sinners on this earth."

Nature is also a powerful tool that Adams believes helps mend the mind, body and spirit. It's peaceful, which he said is the type of environment veterans need.

"You need all those to regroup yourself back in society. It's really hard to come out of a war, or wars, and describe that to the average human being," Adams said.

The lodge has hosted veterans of World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam to veterans who have served in the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Operation Desert Storm.

Many of the veterans that have come to the lodge have never had a chance to heal or "come home", Adams said.

Some of those men were Marines that Adams served with directly a decade ago.

"They saw me in an IED blast. They didn't have time to heal. They were able to see that I was okay and it was time for them to start healing. They had given enough to the country. It was time to start the healing process," Adams said.

"We also had a veteran talk about Vietnam. He hadn't talked about it since 1968," Adams said.

Combat veterans, regardless of where they served or experienced warfare, establish a connection with one another at the lodge.

Older veterans find purpose in helping their younger counterparts. Adams said the connection can be overwhelming at times for the Vietnam veterans because of the newfound sense of purpose they find in these interactions.

Adams said raising kids and having companionship with your wife or husband is meaningful to veterans, but they often go without the relationships they had with their fellow soldiers they had beside them in the heat of battle.

"Giving someone millions of dollars, houses, or trip – that's great. But that's only mending the problem. Giving someone a sense of purpose is something we have to do," Adams said.

"When the Vietnam veterans tell my generation 'I get it, and it won't last forever', it gives the Vietnam guys a sense of purpose. The longer you hold it in the deeper it gets. That's something we realized at Walter Reed. We started getting off our medications the more we talked about what happened."

Adams said any veteran who wants to come and hunt at the Wings of Valor Lodge need only apply.

Individual applications come to the lodge free of charge. That means the organization will cover the cost of travel and any other expenses incurred to ensure the veteran doesn't pay a dime out of their own pocket.

To apply for a hunt or learn more about Wings of Valor Lodge, go to www.wingsofvalorlodge.org.



A handicap accessible bedroom at Wings of Valor lodge

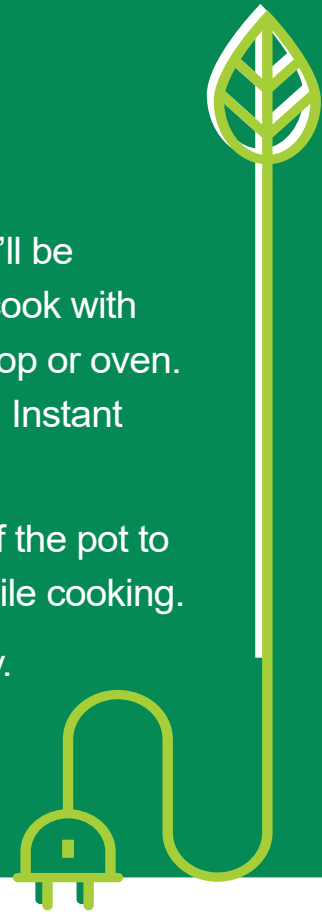
Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

The holiday season is upon us, and that means we'll be using more energy in the kitchen. When possible, cook with smaller countertop appliances instead of the stovetop or oven. Smaller appliances like slow cookers, air fryers and Instant Pots consume less energy.

When using the oven or stovetop, match the size of the pot to the heating element and place a lid over the pot while cooking.

The food will cook faster, and you'll use less energy.

Source: Dept. of Energy



The Renville-Sibley
office will be
closed Thursday,
Nov. 23, in
observance of
Thanksgiving.

August Board Meeting Highlights

The September board meeting was held on Tuesday, September 26 at 8 a.m. All board members were present except Kylie Rieke. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Norris, Cindy Mertens, Gene Alex, and Amy Ervin.

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the August 22 board meeting
 - Operating and disbursement reports for the month of July
 - Capital Credits to Estates
 - Safety Report for August
 - Resolution of Board of Directors Authorizing the Amendment of the Retirement Security Plan
 - Resolution of the Board of Directors Authorizing the Amendment of the Safe Harbor 401(K) Provisions Under the NRECA 401(K) Pension Plan
 - District 1 Board Vacancy
- The board reviewed:
- Total new members

- Capital Credits Transferred
- Reports from staff members as to the activities in their department.

Items in the reports include:

- o High-level Statement of Operations review – YTD through August (unaudited)
- o Organization activities
- o East River update
- o Basin Electric update
- o NRECA update
- o MREA update
- o Linecrew work in progress, equipment update, and outage update
- o Accounts Receivable
- Sale of Cooperative facilities
- 990 Report
- Christmas Open House

Please contact the Renville-Sibley office if you would like more information regarding the board meeting.

WHERE'S THE NUMBER?

Last month RSCPA member found their member number in the newsletter. Congratulations! The credit will start over with a value of \$15. Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by the 1st of November, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

OUTAGE REPORT

Affecting 10 members or more

Date: 8-2-23

Time off: 9 AM

Time on: 10:40 AM

Substation: Birch Cooley

Cause: Other Prearranged

Date: 8-3-23

Time off: 9:11 AM

Time on: 9:27 AM

Substation: Emmet

Cause: Other Prearranged

Date: 8-24-23

Time off: 6:42 AM

Time on: 7:37 AM

Substation: Henryville

Cause: Tree Failure

Date: 8-31-23

Time off: 9 AM

Time on: 10:33 AM

Substation: Henryville

Cause: Other Prearranged

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

Notice:

The October board meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 24 at 8 a.m.

The November board meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 28 at 8 a.m.



Dignity courtesy of Travel South Dakota

DIGNITY

Celebrating American Indian Heritage

Scott Waltman

Rising from the prairie land as it gives way to bluffs on the east side of the Missouri River is a spectacular sculpture commemorating both South Dakota's 125 anniversary and the state's original inhabitants.

Dignity of the Earth and Sky was built by Sturgis-based sculptor Dale Claude Lamphere, who used to be the state's poet laureate.

The sculpture was erected in 2016 after Norm and Eunabel McKie announced it as a gift to South Dakota upon the state's quasiquintennial in 2014.

Dignity towers 50 feet above the ground, beckoning motorists as they travel along Interstate 90. From the

east, it's the gateway to West River en route to the beautiful Black Hills. From the west, it's a sign to travelers that they are closer to the Minnesota border than the state's most popular playgrounds that range from Wall to Spearfish to Hot Springs.

Ashley Riehle of Sylvania, Ohio, which is on the northwestern outskirts of Toledo and just south of the Michigan

border, said the stretch of I-90 alone makes South Dakota one of the best road trip states in the nation.

She visited South Dakota in 2021, driving from Sioux Falls to the Black Hills and back and twice stopping at the Dignity monument. She planned to visit the sculpture during her drive but said the Chamberlain area also doubled as a logical place to take a break.

As a history buff, Riehle appreciates





Jeremy and Stacey Waltner of Freeman visit the Dignity of Earth and Sky sculpture in 2018.

both the beauty and the significance of Dignity.

“I thought it was great that South Dakota acknowledges the first people that occupied the state,” she said.

Many states don’t, she said, and she doesn’t know of any such significant recognitions in Ohio or Michigan.

Jeremy Waltner of Freeman, South Dakota, also appreciates the sculpture on multiple levels.

“It is as impressive as you can imagine just in terms of both size and impact,” he said.

Being a South Dakotan, he knew of Dignity and that he wanted to visit. But he also wanted to make sure his wife Stacey, daughter Ella and son Oliver could share the experience. They stopped during a trip west in summer 2018.

The sculpture pays homage to South Dakota’s Native American population, setting it apart from so many other tourist stops in the state, Waltner said.

“It’s education as much as it is art,” he said, adding that the context behind Dignity is critical.

Three Native American women from Rapid City served as models for the sculpture, which was created east of the town in an isolated area along the Cheyenne River.

Lamphere’s other creations include work in the South Dakota State Capitol in Pierre and the Arch of Dreams in Sioux Falls. He’s done commissioned portraits of Bob and Dolores Hope, Burl Ives, Walter Annenberg, George and Eleanor McGovern and others, according to his website.

For Dignity, he had a specific goal.

“I wanted something that would really honor the indigenous people of the Great Plains, and I kept that in mind all the time. I made the work reflect the name that it has of Dignity, and I think that’s part of what makes it work so well,” Lamphere has said of his creation.

Riehle noted that the star quilt Dignity wears has meaning.

It’s comprised of more than 100 blue diamonds as Dignity holds it behind her back in her outstretched arms.

In Native American culture, star quilts are a sign of respect and are often given as gifts to honor somebody for a substantial achievement in their life.

Including the quilt was a nice touch that took some planning, Riehle said, because it’s a direct tie to the Lakota culture.

While there is a plaque at Dignity that briefly tells the story of the sculpture, Waltner said he’s not sure most people realize the history.

In fact, he said, he’s not sure if most people set out to visit Dignity or just happen across her as they zip through the heart of the state on the interstate.

“It’s South Dakota’s greatest conversational piece outside of two gigantic granite carvings in the Black Hills,” Waltner said, referring to Mount Rushmore and the Crazy Horse Memorial.

Either way, he said, people who take time to admire the grand piece of art wind up learning a little bit.

When he stopped with his family, he said there was a good crowd of people visiting about the sculpture, smiling as they looked on in awe and waiting in line so they could get their pictures taken

with Dignity.

Waltner said he has stopped to see the sculpture twice on his own.

Riehle met friends from Denver and Chicago in the Black Hills as part of her trip. She had been to South Dakota before but got to see and do much more in 2021. She visited Sioux Falls, Mitchell’s Corn Palace, Deadwood, the Badlands, Wall Drug, Spearfish Canyon, Custer State Park, the Chapel in the Hills, Pactola Lake, Palisades State Park and other popular places.

All were fun, but Dignity was special, she said, because it is a reflection of the true foundation of South Dakota’s history.

“So much history focuses on when the white settlers got there,” Riehle said.

Dignity is deeper.

The McKies donated \$1 million to the Dignity project. Less than a decade later, that investment helps the thousands upon thousands of people who stop just east of Chamberlain each year take a moment to remember and acknowledge the rich history of South Dakota’s first citizens.

Additional Facts:

- November is National American Indian Heritage Month. It’s a time to remember and celebrate the important contributions of Native people and their cultures, traditions, and histories.
- The first state to declare and celebrate an American Indian Day was New York on the second Saturday in May 1916.
- In 1990, the month of November was approved by a joint resolution and signed by President George H. W. Bush as “National American Indian Heritage Month.”
- Central Electric Cooperative proudly powers Dignity and the rest area where thousands of visitors stop each year to celebrate the beauty of the American Indian.

Scholar of the Month

Renville-Sibley Co-op Power, your Touchstone Energy Cooperative, congratulates Ellysn Livingston on being selected as the September Scholar of the Month. Ellysn is a senior at Renville County West High School and was nominated because of the enthusiasm she exhibits about communication and enjoys using Spanish to interact with her classmates. She enjoys the more task-oriented classes that allow her creativity to flow within her work. She is helpful and empathetic when communicating with her peers and is non-judgmental of others. Renville-Sibley Co-op Power salutes Ellysn Livingston as the September Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Month.



Ellysn Livingston, September's Scholar of the Month.

REMINDER

As of August 7th, Renville-Sibley's headquarters is now located at 515 Hwy 212 W in Danube. If you plan to drop off your payments, please use the dropbox located on the east side of the building.

OPERATION ROUND UP

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. Contact the office at 320-826-2593 for more information.

NOTICE TO CO-GENERATORS

In order to comply with Minnesota Statutes 216B.164 and in compliance with RSCPA's adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, RSCPA is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers, who satisfy the conditions as a qualifying facility. RSCPA is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over the interconnections, sales, and purchases are subject to resolution by the RSCPA board.

Interested members should contact our office at 515 Hwy 212 W, PO Box 68, Danube, MN 56230 via email at renville-sibley@rscpa.coop or by calling 800-826-2593 or 320-826-2593.

Comparative Report

	Current YTD	One Year Ago YTD	10 Years Ago YTD
Average # of Consumers	1,878	1,889	1,918
kWhs purchased	12,967,875	7,203,530	10,269,155
Cost of purchased power	\$957,148.26	\$418,461.11	\$585,045.71

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

Co-op Seeks Nominating Committee Members

Renville-Sibley is looking for members who would like to serve on the cooperative's Nominating Committees. Nominating Committees (one for each director district) will be meeting in January and will be looking for candidates to run for the board of directors. Candidates chosen by the nominating committee will be put on the ballot. A member may also appear on the ballot by petition of 10 or more

members residing in such district. The candidates for each district will be voted for at the annual meeting.

If you would like to be on one of the Nominating Committees, if you would like to be considered as a candidate or if you know of someone that you would like to be considered as a candidate, please let us know by calling the office at 800-826-2593.

Heat Credit Begins

Members who have electric heat (metered with a separate submeter) pay only \$0.060/kWh for energy used to heat their home/shop during the months of October through April. This lower rate will be reflected starting with the November statement. If you have a separate breaker for your heat meter, please remember to turn it on or you will be billed at the regular energy rate. If the majority of your home is heated with electric heat and you are not on our metered electric heat rate, please contact the office for more information.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR! Holiday Open House

Renville-Sibley will be hosting our annual Holiday Open House on Thursday, December 7th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Those who attend can register to win a \$50 energy credit. While you are in town, stop over and visit Danube Upholstery, Minnwest Bank and Flora Mutual Insurance who will be having their open house that day as well.

Mission Statement

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association will provide 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 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. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Nov. 2-4
Huron Ringneck Festival and
Bird Dog Challenge
 Huron, SD
 605-352-0000

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.

OCT. 24-28
Grey Goose Halloween Display
 6 p.m.
 19988 Grey Goose Rd.
 Pierre, SD

OCT. 28
Hill City Children's Boo Bash and Pumpkin Festival
 Hill City Visitor's Center
 Hill City, SD
 605-574-2368

OCT. 28-29
Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Association
 Ramkota Hotel Exhibit Hall
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-731-9155

NOV. 3
Plankinton Service Club Fun Night
 7 p.m.
 Aurora County Ag Building
 Plankinton, SD

NOV. 4-5
Benson's Flea Market
 W.H. Lyons Fairgrounds
 Sioux Falls, SD

NOV. 5
American Legion Post 15 Pancake Breakfast
 8:30 a.m.
 S.D. Military Heritage Alliance Building
 Sioux Falls, SD

NOV. 5
Turkey Dinner/ Silent Auction
 11:45 a.m.
 RVUMC
 Rapid City, SD

NOV. 10-12
Christmas at the Barn
 10 a.m.
 Groton, SD

NOV. 10-11
Sioux Empire Arts & Crafts Show
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
 Sioux Falls, SD

NOV. 11
Sisseton Area Merchants & Crafters Holiday Extravaganza
 Sisseton, SD

NOV. 12
Lutefisk, Lefse & Meatball
 4-7 p.m.
 Trinity Lutheran Church
 Chamberlain, SD
 605-730-0553

NOV. 24
Parade of Lights
 7 p.m.
 Dakota Avenue
 Huron, SD

NOV. 25
Mid-Winter Fair
 Gregory Auditorium
 Gregory, SD
 605-830-9778

NOV. 30-DEC. 3
Hatchery Holidays
 D.C. Booth Fish Hatchery
 Spearfish, SD

DEC. 2
6th Annual Holiday Party, Tour of Homes, Silent Auction
 4 p.m.
 Olive Grove Golf Course
 Groton, SD

DEC. 8-9
Alexandria's Winter Festival
 5 p.m.
 Alexandria, SD

DEC. 8-9
Junkin' Market Days
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Center
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-941-4958

DEC. 17
Christmas Cantata
 3 p.m.
 Hermosa United Church of Christ
 Hermosa, SD

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