A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

RENVILLE-SIBLEY
DECEMBER 2026 VOL. 27 NO. 8

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



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Photo Submitted by Black Hills Electric Cooperative

Renville-Sibley Board of Directors Approve Capital Credit Retirement



Amy Ervin
Interim Office Manager

Capital credits can be confusing to new members and sometimes even the more seasoned members could use a refresher, from time to time. So let me explain how capital credits work.

Did you know as a member of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association (RSCPA), you receive the perks of co-op membership? RSCPA is a member-owned company, referred to as a Cooperative. As a cooperative, our main goal is to provide at-cost electric service. Anyone who uses or purchases electric energy is a member. As a member, you invest in the efficient operation of your co-op through your electric rates. Unlike an investor-owned utility, we don't pay dividends or other amounts to shareholders who don't purchase electricity from us.

RSCPA pays all operating expenses throughout the year, and if any operating revenue is leftover, we allocate it as capital credits. When financial conditions permit, the cooperative's Board of Directors determine it is financially feasible and prudent, and when we meet the financial requirements stated in our loan documents, the board will approve to pay out capital credits to the members.

At the October board meeting, the Board of Directors of RSCPA approved the disbursement of a $325,000, less estate retirements already paid out during the year, to be applied on the December statement. Checks will be issued to inactive members who have a capital credit balance in the years being retired based on a minimum check value.

The retirement is based on the amount of electricity each member consumed during the year 2025 for the RSCPA portion of the retirement, during the year 2004 and 2005 for the East River portion, and the year 2004 for the Basin portion of the retirement. Please see the article published in the September 2026 *Cooperative Connections* newsletter for more details on the 2025 margin that was allocated to the members.

The December 2026 retirement includes retiring the remaining 2004 and a portion of 2005 East River allocations and portion of the Basin Electric capital credits from the 2004 allocation. East River and Basin Electric are our Generation and Transmission Cooperatives (G&Ts). RSCPA will retire a portion of the 2025 allocation. Please note that the value of your retirement from RSCPA is based on your 2025 allocation, but the dollars will be retired from each member's oldest unretired allocation year(s).

Below are some common capital credit questions. If you have any further questions regarding capital credits, please contact the office.

Common Capital Credits Questions:

What are capital credits?

An electric cooperative operates on an at-cost basis by annually "allocating" to each member, based upon the member's purchase of electricity, and operating revenue remaining at the end of the year. Later, as financial conditions permit, these allocated amounts—capital credits—are retired. Capital credits represent the most significant source of equity for RSCPA. Since a cooperative's members are also the people the co-op serves, capital credits reflect each member's ownership in, and contribution to the cooperative. This differs from dividends investor-owned utilities pay shareholders, who may or may not be customers of the utility.

Where does the money come from?

Member-owned, not-for-profit electric co-ops set rates to generate enough revenue to cover wholesale power, local operating expenses, make payments on loans, and generate enough margin to meet financial covenants set by lending institutions. At the end of each year, we subtract operating expenses from the operating revenue collected during the year. The balance is called an operating "margin."

How are margins allocated?

Margins are allocated to members as capital credits based on their purchases from the cooperative—how much power the member used. Member purchases may also be called patronage.

Do investor-owned or municipal utilities retire capital credits?

No. Within the electric industry, capital credits only exist at not-for-profit electric cooperatives owned by their members.

Are capital credits retired every year?

Each year, the Board of Directors decides whether to retire capital credits based on the financial health of the cooperative. During some years, the co-op may experience growth in the number of new accounts requiring capital investments, or severe storms may result in the need to spend additional funds to repair lines. These and other events might increase costs and decrease member equity, causing the board to not retire capital credits. For this reason, RSCPA's ability to retire capital credits reflects the cooperative's strength and financial stability.

Do I lose my capital credits in the years the co-op decides not to make retirements?

No. All capital credits allocated for every year members have been served are maintained until such time as the board retires them.

How much will be retired in total in 2026?

Approximately $325,000 will be retired for 2026. This total includes estate retirements processed throughout the year, and the general retirement scheduled for December.

I did not get electric service from RSCPA in 2025, will I get any retirement?

Maybe. Although you will not receive a retirement from 2025, you may receive a

retirement if you purchased electric service in 2004 or 2005.

I did not get electric service from RSCPA in 2004 or 2005, will I get any retirement?

Maybe. Although you will not receive a retirement from 2004 or 2005, you may receive a retirement if you purchased electric service in 2025.

How much has RSCPA paid in total capital credit retirements since it began in 1938?

RSCPA has paid approximately $15.4 million in cumulative general and estate capital credit retirements to current and former members as of the end of 2025.

How often do members receive capital credit retirements?

The Board of Directors decides each year by November whether or not to retire capital credits. When the cooperative is strong enough financially and member equity levels high enough, the board directs staff to retire some portion of past years' capital credits.

How will the retirement work?

Active members will receive a credit on their December electric statement. Inactive members will be mailed a check provided the amount is over $5. Due to the expense involved in printing checks, the minimum retirement check that will be written will be $5. 799601

What if I have moved?

If you move or no longer have electric service with RSCPA, it is important that you inform the cooperative of your current address, so that future retirements can be properly mailed to you. If you purchased electricity during the years being retired, then you will receive a capital credit retirement, even if you move out of our service area. If we have your current address, we will send your retirement check by mail.

How many people will get retirements?

Roughly 1,475 active members will have a credit applied to their account and about 510 inactive members will receive a check.

Can I donate my retirement back to the cooperative?

Yes. If you would like to donate your retirement back to the cooperative, please call our office at 800-826-2593 or email renville-sibley@rscpa.coop for instructions. All donated capital credit retirements will be designated to our scholarship fund. Scholarships are awarded each year at our annual meeting to students in our local communities.



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

RENVILLE-SIBLEY CO-OP POWER

(USPS 019-074)

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Roger Manthei – Vice Chair
Vicky Firle – Secretary/Treasurer
Jeff Boersma
Gary Eekhoff
Alan Neyers
Gary Peterson
Helen Ruebel
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Shawn Beckler – Crew Chief
Mike Benson – Journeyman Lineman
Brad Braulick – Crew Chief
Nick Bruns – Interim Operations Manager
Anthony Carruth – Journeyman Lineman
Amy Ervin – Interim Office Manager
Brayden Fischer – Journeyman Lineman
Carren Frank – Finance Specialist
Kaitlyn Loftus – Cooperative Support Specialist
DeeAnne Norris – CEO
Clint Olson – Journeyman Lineman
Marc Snyder – Cooperative Analyst
Jill Woods – Member Services Professional

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Web site: www.rscpa.coop

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CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS FOR WINTER STORM READINESS

Some of the best Christmas gifts aren't the ones that get used right away.

A flashlight, emergency radio or box of freeze-dried meals may not be the most exciting thing under the tree, but when a South Dakota winter storm rolls in, practical gifts can quickly become some of the most valuable items in the house.

Winter weather can bring heavy snow, bitter cold, drifting roads and extended power outages. In rural areas, where homes may be miles from the nearest town, it can take longer for roads to reopen or help to arrive. This Christmas, consider giving something that can help friends and family stay safe, warm and prepared.

A portable radio with a weather band is a good place to start. Battery-powered or hand-crank models can provide weather alerts and emergency information even if the power is out or cellular service becomes unreliable. Many also include flashlights, USB charging ports and other emergency features. For someone who lives in a rural area or travels frequently during the winter, a weather radio can provide another way to stay informed when conditions change quickly.

Food is another important part of storm preparedness. Freeze-dried meals have a long shelf life and are easy to store, making them useful for emergency kits. Pair several meals with bottled water, shelf-stable snacks or an insulated thermos for a practical preparedness package. Canned goods, granola bars, dried fruit and other foods that do not require refrigeration can also help a household get through a period when roads are closed or travel is discouraged.

For the car, consider putting together a winter emergency kit. Useful items include a warm blanket, gloves, flashlight, jumper cables, ice scraper, first-aid supplies and nonperishable food. A compact shovel and traction aids can also come in handy if a vehicle becomes stuck in snow. Road flares or reflective warning triangles can help make a stranded vehicle more visible.

This is especially important in South Dakota and Minnesota, where a short drive can quickly turn into a long wait if snow begins to blow across rural highways. Even experienced winter drivers can find themselves dealing with whiteout conditions, stalled traffic or roads that close with little warning.



A portable power bank can help keep a cellphone charged during an outage, allowing someone to receive alerts, check road conditions or contact family and emergency services. Larger rechargeable battery packs can power multiple small devices, which may be handy in the event of an extended outage.

Warm clothing also makes a practical gift. Wool socks, insulated gloves, hand warmers and heavy blankets can provide extra protection from the cold at home or on the road. An insulated hat, neck gaiter or pair of winter boots can also be useful for anyone who spends time outdoors checking livestock, clearing snow or traveling between buildings.

Battery-powered lanterns and headlamps are another good option. A headlamp allows someone to keep both hands free while finding supplies or moving around a dark home. Lanterns can provide area lighting for a room without relying on candles. Consider including extra batteries – just in case.

Other practical ideas include a new carbon monoxide detector, fire extinguisher, first-aid kit or basic tool kit. As a gift for parents, grandparents and new homeowners, consider replacing their smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

While it's difficult to prepare for every possible emergency, having supplies on hand can help you and your loved ones stay comfortable, informed and safe until the storm passes or travel becomes safe again.

"Never drive high loads under low power lines!"



Artwork by Lydell Weaver

Lydell warns readers to never climb near power lines. Thank you for sharing, Lydell! Lydell's parents are Lyndon and Gwen Weaver, members of Dakota Energy 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.



Rise & DINE

COLD OATMEAL MUESLI

Ingredients:

½ cup raisins
½ cup old-fashioned oatmeal
1½ cups quick oatmeal
⅓ cup brown sugar
½ tsp. cinnamon
2 cups milk

Method

Mix all ingredients together. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Serve cold. If desired, add walnuts, apples or fresh berries just before serving.

Elaine Rieck
Southeastern Electric

BREAKFAST HOT DISH

Ingredients:

14 slices bread, divided
2 cups milk
½ lb. cubed ham
½ lb. sliced cheese
5 eggs
½ tbsp. mustard
⅓ cup melted butter

Method

Place 7 bread slices on bottom of greased 9x13 pan. Spread cheese and ham over bread slices.
Mix eggs, milk, and mustard, then pour over.

Tear the remaining 7 bread slices into pieces and sprinkle over the mixture. Pour melted butter over the bread pieces.

Bake 1 hour at 350°F.

Rowena Wipf
Northern Electric

OVERNIGHT COFFEE CAKE

Ingredients:

½ cup white sugar
½ cup brown sugar
¾ cup butter
1 cup buttermilk
2 eggs, beaten
2 cups flour
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. baking powder

Topping:
½ cup brown sugar
1 tsp. cinnamon
½ tsp. nutmeg (optional)
Nuts, as desired

Method

Cream together the butter, white sugar and brown sugar. Add the beaten eggs. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, salt, baking soda and baking powder. Add the dry ingredients to the butter mixture alternately with the buttermilk.

Spread the batter in a 9x13-inch baking pan. Combine the topping ingredients and sprinkle over the batter. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

In the morning, bake at 350°F for 35 minutes or until done.

Rowena Wipf
Northern Electric

RECIPE CORRECTION: SWEDISH PANCAKES

Ingredients:

1½ cups flour
3 tbsp. sugar
½ tsp. salt
3 eggs
2 cups milk
2 tbsp. melted butter

Lois J. Larson
Clay-Union Electric

Method

Sift together the flour, sugar and salt. In a separate bowl, beat the eggs until thick and softly mounded. Add the milk and melted butter to the eggs, then add the flour mixture.

Lightly grease a griddle with butter. Spoon 1 tablespoon of batter onto the griddle for each pancake. Cook over medium heat until lightly browned on both sides.

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 2027. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

What To Do in Case of a Power Outage

The weather can be challenging at times for our members as well as Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association (RSCPA). While the cooperative hopes it will never happen, Mother Nature can cause damage to our power lines resulting in a power outage.

If you experience a power outage, please contact the office at 320-826-2593 or 800-826-2593. During business hours, RSCPA will do our best to answer as many calls as our phone system allows. If the number of calls coming into the office is overwhelming, the calls will be transferred to Cooperative Response Center (CRC) in Austin, MN.

After hours, all calls are transferred to CRC. Depending on the extent of the storm and the volume of calls coming into CRC, you may reach a live operator, or you may go into their automated system. It is helpful to your cooperative and CRC to have your correct phone number in RSCPA's database when reporting an outage. Members are asked to review the phone numbers printed on the bill statement for accuracy and notify the cooperative if a change should be made to this contact information.

You also have the option to send a text message to report an outage. To sign-up for this feature, please visit our web site www.rscpa.coop and click on the Setup Text Outage Reporting in the middle of the home page. You will be asked a series of questions to get this service set up. Contact the office if you have any problems.

Remember, during times of large power outages, tune in to the following radio stations for updates on the status of the power outage: KLGR, KOLV, Q102, KWLM and KDJS.

Notice to Small Power Producers Cogenerators

In compliance with the Cooperative's adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association (RSCPA) is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers that satisfy the conditions of a qualifying facility, provided the qualifying facility complies with the Cooperative's rules, adopted interconnection process, and associated technical requirements.

RSCPA will provide free information to all interested members regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application approved by the Cooperative and an executed contract.

Any dispute over interconnections, sales, and purchases are subject to resolution by the RSCPA Board.

Members interested in further information should contact RSCPA at 1-800-826-2593.

MN State Resiliency Grant



Nick Bruns
Interim Operations Manager

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association (RSCPA) was awarded funding through the MN State Resiliency Grant. This grant allowed RSCPA to purchase and install new electronic reclosers at 35 locations on the distribution lines served by the Emmet substation. This is part of our grid modernization plan, our ongoing effort to strengthen the reliability and resilience of the electric system so it can serve members for years to come.

What is a recloser? A recloser works like a smart circuit breaker for power lines. Many outages are caused by brief disturbances, such as a tree branch brushing a line, an animal making contact with equipment, or a nearby lightning strike. When this happens, the recloser briefly cuts power to clear the problem. Then it automatically tries to restore service. If the problem was temporary, power comes back within seconds, and you may only notice a quick blink of your lights instead of a lengthy outage.

The new electronic reclosers have built-in intelligence. Our crews can program how quickly each device responds and how it reacts to different types of faults. When there is a lasting problem on the line, the reclosers can isolate the affected section. This keeps the outage limited to as few members as possible, so a problem in one area is less likely to leave a larger area without power.

Because the devices are programmable, they also give us more flexibility in how we operate the grid. We can adjust settings as conditions change,





manage the system more efficiently, and respond to problems more effectively. This flexibility adds to the grid's resilience, helping it withstand storms and other disruptions and recover from them more quickly.

The reclosers are also built with the future in mind. The new electronic reclosers have the ability to connect to a future SCADA System (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition). Once implemented SCADA would allow RSCPA operators to monitor the reclosers in real time and control them remotely. With that capability, we could learn about an outage and its location sooner, potentially restore power to some areas without sending a crew to the site, and send crews directly to the source of a problem. That could mean faster response times and less time without power for our members.

Through this grant, RSCPA has strengthened grid reliability and resiliency. The new equipment purchased with the funding allows us to minimize outage duration, isolate affected areas during disruptions, and prepare our infrastructure for future technology.

At RSCPA, delivering safe, reliable power to our members is our top priority. This project is one more step in that commitment.



CHRISTMAS ON CALL

Sometimes The Holidays Have to Wait

The 2016 Christmas Storm Europa left 23,000 members without power and hundreds of broken poles across the state. *Photo Submitted by East River Electric Power Cooperative*

Frank Turner
frank.turner@sdrea.coop

On Christmas evening in 2016, West Central Electric Cooperative Foreman Dustin Vollmer, then a lineman, headed north from Midland to investigate outages as a blizzard swept across western South Dakota. They made it about 12 miles.

"You couldn't even see the reflectors on the side of the road," Vollmer recalled. "We ended up pulling over and sat there till about 4 in the morning."

When conditions improved enough to turn around, the trucks had made their own snow drifts, and Vollmer's truck overheated twice on the trip back to Midland. More work awaited.

The 2016 Winter Storm Europa brought blizzard conditions, freezing rain and powerful winds across South Dakota on Christmas Day, damaging hundreds of utility poles. According to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, more than 23,000 members of at least 20 electric cooperatives statewide were without power by Christmas evening. Restoration work would stretch into the new year.

Vollmer joined West Central Electric in 1999 after graduating from line school at Mitchell Technical College. Even in high school, he understood that linemen sometimes worked holidays. "I realized it could be any time, just whenever the lights go out," Vollmer said.

When Winter Storm Europa caused widespread outages across West Central Electric's service territory, neighboring cooperatives sent crews and equipment to help restore power. Vollmer remembers working alongside linemen from nearby West River Electric Association, one of several cooperatives that came to their aid. Nine years later, Vollmer was able to return the favor when a storm struck Black Hills Electric's service territory in the days leading up to Christmas.



Dustin Vollmer and other West Central Linemen get the power back on during the holidays. *Photo Submitted by West Central Electric Cooperative*

A Return To The Black Hills

On Dec. 18, 2025, winds exceeding 100 mph swept across western South Dakota, uprooting trees, breaking utility poles and leaving more than 11,000 Black Hills Electric Cooperative meters without power. More than 96% of the co-op's electrical system was affected, making it the largest outage event in Black Hills Electric's history.

With damage spread throughout its service territory, Black Hills Electric requested assistance from neighboring cooperatives. Crews and equipment arrived from across western South Dakota, including Vollmer's crew from West Central Electric.

Vollmer was back to work over the Christmas holiday, honoring the cooperative spirit. He said getting around was easier than it had been during the 2016 blizzard, but widespread tree damage made restoration difficult in the Black Hills' rugged terrain. Crews worked to clear fallen trees, replace poles and repair damaged lines throughout the service territory.

Altogether, 55 additional linemen from six neighboring cooperatives and a local contractor assisted Black Hills Electric. Crews worked 12- to 16-hour shifts, prepared to remain through Christmas if the power wasn't restored in time.

"All the outside crews said they weren't leaving," recalled Bill Brisk, manager of operations at Black Hills Electric. "They stayed to help us finish."

By Christmas Eve, nearly all of Black Hills Electric's members had power again, allowing the visiting crews to head home. Black Hills Electric employees continued limited restoration work through Christmas, while Vollmer made it home to Midland late Christmas Eve.

The Families Behind The Work

Vollmer was fortunate to spend much of Christmas with his family following both storms, but not every lineman made it home for the holidays. During the 2016 storm, some employees were called back from trips while others spent days repairing power lines.

Ken Schlimgen, former general manager of Central Electric Cooperative, also acknowledged the sacrifices made by employees' families.

"The individuals who receive the least amount of credit for their role are the spouses and family members," Schlimgen wrote in his 2017 Cooperative Connections column following the Europa storm.

When the first call comes, linemen rarely know whether they'll find a small repair or widespread damage. Families have to plan around that uncertainty. Vollmer's family understands the demands.

"They know what it is," Vollmer said. "People out of power, you gotta go."

Vollmer said West Central Electric supports employees when personal or medical circumstances arise, an understanding that works both ways. When a major storm hits, employees know their coworkers and members are depending on them.

Even cooperative members often return that commitment. Vollmer said members offer assistance when a truck gets stuck or crews need help reaching damaged equipment.

"We got real good consumers," he said. "You could usually find somebody. They'll drop everything and come help."

That willingness to help extends across cooperative service territories, where crews regularly assist neighboring cooperatives during major outages. For Vollmer, it's an expectation shared by the people who have worked alongside him throughout his career.

"When stuff gets bad, you're expected to come help," Vollmer said. "You're part of the team."



The 2025 Black Hills Christmas Storm not only left 11,000 members without power, but also uprooted trees in the area, damaging lines as they fell.
Photo Submitted by Black Hills Electric Cooperative

Are You Interested in a New Adventure?

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association (RSCPA) is beginning to plan for the 89th Annual meeting of the membership that will be held on March 23, 2027, 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, Moltke, and Severance in Sibley County; the townships of Ridgely and West Newton in Nicollet County; and the townships of Bandon, Cairo, Camp, Martinsburg, Palmyra, and Wellington in Renville County is represented by Alan Neyers, Whitey Hinderman, and Vicky Firle. Alan Neyer's term will expire in 2027.

The Second District, consisting of the townships of Delhi and Honner in Redwood County; and the townships of Beaver Falls, Birch Cooley, Bird Island, Flora, Henryville, Kingman, Melville, and Norfolk in Renville County is represented by Helen Ruebel, Wayland Zaske, and Jeff Boersma. Helen Ruebel's term will expire in 2027.

The Third District, consisting of the townships of Holland and Roseland in Kandiyohi County; Rheiderland in Chippewa County the townships of Crooks, Emmet, Ericson, Hawk Creek, Sacred Heart, Troy, Wang, and Winfield in Renville County is represented by Gary Eekhoff, Gary Peterson, and Roger Manthei. Gary Peterson's term will expire in 2027. **Gary Peterson is not seeking re-election, and this District will have an open seat.**

As stated in the RSCPA by-laws, the following are the Qualifications and Tenure for the position of Director:

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:

- Abide by, promote and uphold the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws, both of which can be found on our website, and Policies of RSCPA.
- Attend regular and special Board meetings of the Cooperative.
- 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 RSCPA.

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 last Wednesday 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 RSCPA Board of Directors, contact the RSCPA office at 1-800-826-2593 by December 1st for further information.



OUTAGE REPORT:

Affecting 10 members or more

Date: 9/8/26
Time off: 9:00 AM
Time on: 9:38 AM
Substation: Emmet
Cause: Other Prearranged

Date: 9/20/26
Time off: 10:48 AM
Time on: 12:38 PM
Substation: Henryville
Cause: Small Animal/Bird

Date: 9/30/26
Time off: 10:30 AM
Time on: 11:20 AM
Substation: Wellington/Cairo
Cause: Other Prearranged

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

FOR SALE:

Corn stalk bales small squares.
$3.00/bale
Bob Gummert
Renville, MN 56284
320-212-4725

WANTED:

Farmland to rent. Young farmer looking to expand. Renter eligible for tax credit.
Kolt Krumrey
Redwood Falls, MN 56283
320-522-2181

3020 Diesel PS trans
Steve Rubischko
Gibbon, MN 55335
507-3276646



The Foster Care Shop offers free toys and essentials to local foster families in Black Hawk, S.D.
Photo courtesy of Light of Mine Ranch

FOSTER CARE
THE COMMUNITY'S KIDS

Light of Mine Ranch Helps Black Hills Foster Families Find the Supplies and Support They Need

Frank Turner
frank.turner@sdrea.coop

When children visiting the Foster Care Shop in Black Hawk, S.D., ask Jordan Combs how much something costs, he gets to give them good news. Everything is free.

Combs said children's eyes light up when they hear the news. They tell their foster parents, then make another trip around the shop.

"I'm the yes guy," Combs said. "If you ask me if you can have it, I'm going to say yes."

Combs and his wife, Mallory, founded Light of Mine Ranch, which provides clothing, baby equipment and household supplies at no cost to foster families.

The inspiration for the Foster Care Shop began when Jordan and Mallory Combs started fostering in 2016.

The couple had been considering international adoption when they attended a community dinner. Local agencies described the need for foster parents, and that's the moment they decided to foster.

"We just felt like God put it on our heart," Combs said.

Since then, the couple has provided long-term foster care for 10 children. When including emergency placements and short stays, Combs estimates that number exceeds 40. Today, the couple has five children, including two daughters they adopted.

As they cared for children and got to know other foster parents, they saw how stretched families could become. Everyday chores like grocery shopping became more complicated. Eating out became more expensive, and they wanted to help ease those burdens.

In 2020, the couple began building a nonprofit. They envisioned homes for foster families on a ranch, giving parents the space and support to focus on children. When housing prices did



Jordan and Mallory Combs have five children, including two they adopted.
Photo courtesy of Light of Mine Ranch

not cooperate with their vision, they put their dream on hold and began helping families on a smaller scale.

"We started looking at what impact can we make now," Combs said.

Light of Mine Ranch helped pay sports fees, purchase equipment and provide bicycles and bunk beds. As community members learned about the work, donations began filling the Combs family's garage.

At the same time, Combs noticed a recurring problem. Someone would offer a crib on Facebook when no family needed one. A few weeks later, a foster family would ask for a crib.

The couple decided to create a shop where donated supplies could be stored until a family needed them.

The Combs family opened the Foster Care Shop in June 2025, giving families a central place to find everything from strollers and shoes to meals and school supplies.

"We're trying to be your first stop to get all the supplies that you need," Combs said.

The shop also serves kinship families, including grandparents, aunts and uncles caring for relatives' children. Relatives often have little time to prepare, Combs said. A grandparent whose own children are grown may suddenly need a crib, a car seat and clothing for an infant.

The organization also assists some families referred by the South Dakota Department of Social Services.

Combs remembers one family relieved to avoid spending an afternoon driving between stores to gather everything they needed.

"They were happy that they didn't have to spend the whole afternoon shopping around town," Combs said.

Combs recalled another girl who had not started school by mid-October because of her family's circumstances.

"She was able to come here and get all her school supplies to get started for school," Combs said.

Since its grand opening, community donations have filled the shop faster than Combs expected. The same moment toys run low after an event, a donor always seems to arrive with boxes of puzzles, toys and dollhouses. When a family picks up a crib, Combs said another donation seems to take its place.

While the shop helps foster families with everyday expenses, the couple is still working toward a place for families and children to stay.

"It'd be a six-bedroom home," Combs said. The organization has identified a prospective site south of Rapid City, but Combs said there is no construction timeline.

The home would provide temporary accommodations for children awaiting placement. Combs said it could also provide space for foster families to rest and take a break. Having several bedrooms would help accommodate sibling groups and children of different ages.

Whether a child stays with a foster family for a weekend or a year, Combs believes the time spent together matters.

"You can make it meaningful to them for that time," he said.

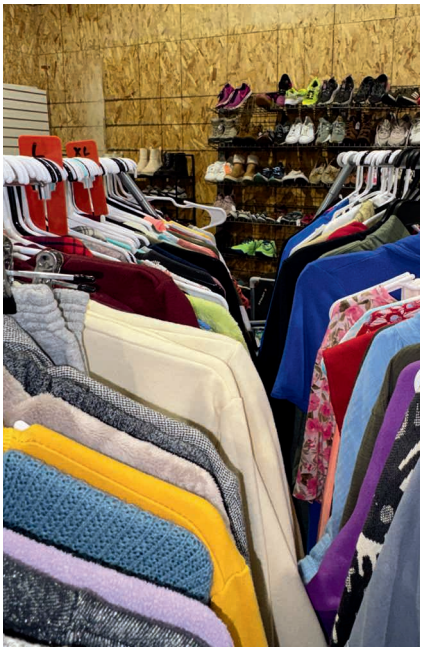
Private donations fund the organization's work and local volunteerism keeps it running, Combs said. They are always looking for more volunteers to sort donations and organize supplies.

Combs hopes the community will also rally together to help make foster families feel less alone. Taking children into a home is a family's decision, he said, but helping care for them is something the wider community can share.

"These are the community's kids," Combs said.



The Foster Care Shop has everything a foster family might need - everything from toys and strollers to racks of clothes. *Photos courtesy of Light of Mine Ranch*



Help or get involved

Families seeking assistance and people interested in helping can visit lightofmineranch.com for information. Combs recommends checking current hours and donation needs before bringing items to the shop.

October Board Meeting Highlights

The October board meeting was held on Wednesday, October 28th, 2026, at 7 a.m. Directors Eekhoff, Firle, Hinderman, Manthei, Neyers (via Zoom), Peterson, Ruebel (via Zoom), and Zaske, were present. Others present were DeeAnne Norris, Nick Bruns, and Amy Ervin. Absent: Director Boersma

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the September 30th, 2026, board meeting
- Director Expenses
- Operating and disbursement reports for the months of September
- Capital Credits to Estates per Policy 203
- Safety Report for September
- 2027 Market Rate
- 990 Report
- Capital Credit Recommendation
- NRECA PowerXchange Voting Delegates
- CRC Annual Meeting Voting Delegates
- NRTC Annual Meeting Voting Delegates
- Nominating Committee Appointments
- MREA Annual Certification of Voting Delegates & Alternates for all 2027 Membership Meetings

The board reviewed the following items:

- Total new members
- 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 September (unaudited)
  - o Organization activities
  - o Basin Electric update
  - o East River update
  - o Director meeting reports
  - o Linecrew work in progress, equipment update, and outage update
  - o Accounts Receivable
- Policy 105
- CoBank Notice of 2026 Director Special Election

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

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 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 1st of December, 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 2026 or 2027 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

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!

Call 811 or go online to www.gopherstateonecall.org and file a locate request before you dig!

Toll Free: 1-800-252-1166

Board Meeting Notices

The November board meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 25, 2026, at 8:00 a.m.

The December board meeting will be held on Thursday, December 17, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

Operation Round Up

The Operation Round Up Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, October 13, 2026. The following donations were approved:

BLHS Schools Preschool – $500.00 • Funds will provide the preschool classrooms with funds to allow students to have engaging, hands-on spaces to learn and grow. The funds will allow the preschool to purchase durable shelving units for the classroom, wooden pretend play kitchens, and quality gross motor equipment for outdoor play.

Cedar Mountain Area Schools Imagination Library – $500.00 • Funds will be used to provide free books to children in the community each month. Reading is a big steppingstone to learning and helps kids build literacy skills and teach them how to understand the world in different ways.

Danube Fire Department – $500.00 • Funds are needed to purchase a new blower to help in Spring grass burns. Grass burns help with native grass and control weeds. The fire department does 5-10 controlled grass burns per year.

Sibley County Food Share – $250.00 • Funds will be used to purchase culinary foods and provide choices for the Hispanic families as well as provide healthy choices for all families in Sibley County.

West Central Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) – $250.00 • Funds are mainly used to provide a facilitator and purchase some supplies and transportation for the students. Students from KMS, MACCRAY, CMCS, and RCW will tour 50 area businesses to see what opportunities are available to start their own small business or work for a business in one of our many small towns in the Renville-Sibley region.

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 January 5th, 2027. The deadline for applications is December 31, 2026.

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

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 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. 24-DEC. 26
Christmas at the Capitol
Pierre, SD
christmasatthecapitol.sd.gov

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.

NOV. 20-JAN. 3
Winter Wonderland
5 p.m.-12 a.m.
Falls Park
Sioux Falls, SD
605-275-6060

NOV. 25-JAN. 2
1880 Holiday Express
222 Railroad Ave.
Hill City, SD
605-574-2222

NOV. 27-DEC. 31
Hall of Trees
Sat.-Thurs.: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Fri.: 10 a.m.-8 p.m.
Mead Museum
Yankton, SD

NOV. 27-DEC. 27
Christmas Nights of Light
5:30-8:30 p.m.
Storybook Island
1301 Sheridan Lake Rd.
Rapid City, SD
605-342-6357

DEC. 3
City of Yankton Holiday Festival of Lights
4 p.m. Family Activities
6 p.m. Lighted Parade
Yankton, SD
605-665-5234

DEC. 4
'Twas the Night Before Christmas Soup & Sandwich Lunch
11 a.m.-1 p.m.
St. Pius X Catholic Church
Onida, SD
605-765-4841

DEC. 4-5
Christmas in the Hills
Mueller Civic Center
Hot Springs, SD
951-591-2335

DEC. 5
KJAM Parade of Lights
5:30 p.m.
Madison, SD
AmazingMadison.com

DEC. 5
Christmas in the Valley
2-9 p.m.
Irene, SD

DEC. 5-JAN. 6
Garden Glow at McCrory Gardens
5-9 p.m.
Closed Dec. 24-25, Jan. 1
Brookings, SD
605-688-6707

DEC. 5
Holiday Jam with the Hegg Brothers
4 p.m.
Summit Activities Center
Yankton, SD
605-665-5234

DEC. 6
KCBA Hometown Christmas
10 a.m.-4 p.m. (MST)
Kadoka City Auditorium
Kadoka, SD
605-488-0151

DEC. 6
Christmas on the Prairie Concert
St. Anthony's Catholic Church
Hoven, SD
605-948-2451

DEC. 10-13
Christmas at the Cathedral
Thurs. & Fri.: 7:30 p.m.
Sat.: 1 p.m., 7:30 p.m.
Sun. 2 p.m., 7:30 p.m.
Cathedral of St. Joseph
Sioux Falls, SD
Tickets: 605-988-3765

DEC. 12
Lake Campbell Lutheran Church Cookie Walk
9 a.m.
46610 219th St.
Volga, SD
605-864-9907

DEC. 12
Frontier Christmas
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Fort Sisseton State Park
Lake City, SD
605-448-5474

DEC. 12
American Legion Chili Cookoff
11 a.m.
The Alliance; 1600 W. Russell St.
Sioux Falls, SD

DEC. 20
Bethlehem in Brule County
5 p.m.
Ag Building
Pukwana, SD
605-730-0553

Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.