



# Cooperative Connections



**Legislative Voices**

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# The Power of Operation Round Up®



**Lenae Wordes**

lwordes@renville-sibley.coop

It started as a simple idea 27 years ago at one co-op in South Carolina. Just round up the co-op member's electric bill to the next dollar and then use it to do good work in your community. Today, hundreds of electric co-ops throughout the country use this idea to help members and organizations close to home. Renville-Sibley Co-op Power will be rolling out this program to our members beginning with the June 2019 energy bill.

All co-ops adhere to the seven cooperative principles, including "Concern for Community." The Operation Round Up® program is the perfect embodiment of this core principle. The average co-op member donates \$6 with a maximum possible contribution of \$11.88 per year. This may not seem like a large amount, but when combined with nearly 1,900 of Renville-Sibley Co-op Power member accounts, it adds up to make an impact.

Renville-Sibley's program will operate with a board of trustees

that is different from the board of directors for the electric co-op. This allows a group of members to focus on the mission of representing our communities. 295700

All members will automatically be enrolled in the program. However, the program is always voluntary, and at any time, members can request to be removed from the program. Once folks see the good work the program does in their community, most members keep contributing.

Over the years, millions of dollars have been collected and distributed for a wide range of activities. This can include helping a family in need after a house fire, assisting the local food pantry, providing funds so that the local fire department can get a needed piece of equipment, or dozens of other humanitarian efforts that bring electric co-ops even closer to the communities we serve.

While each co-op must respond to the needs of its members, one of the great attributes of co-ops across the country – and the world – is their willingness to share information about the programs that have been successful. Operation Round Up is a perfect example of that cooperative spirit.

Renville-Sibley Co-op Power is pleased to begin offering the Operation Round Up program to the membership. Continue to read upcoming issues of *Cooperative Connections* for more information about the Operation Round Up Program.

A festive background for a Christmas message. It features a large, textured gold Christmas ornament in the foreground on the left, with a silver and gold bell ornament hanging from it. The background is filled with many smaller, out-of-focus gold and silver ornaments, creating a bokeh effect. The text "Merry Christmas" is written in a large, elegant, black cursive font across the top right.

*Merry Christmas*

**All of us at Renville-Sibley wish you joy during the holidays and health and happiness throughout the coming year.**

# Renville-Sibley

## Cooperative Connections

(USPS 019-074)

### Board of Directors

Roger Manthei – Chair  
Philip Nestande – Vice Chair  
Alan Neyers – Secretary/Treasurer  
Steve Benson  
Matt Haubrich  
Whitey Hinderman  
Gary Peterson  
Helen Ruebel  
Wayland Zaske

### Renville-Sibley Employees

Gene Alex – Line Superintendent  
Brian Athmann – Journeyman Lineman  
Shawn Beckler – Crew Chief  
Mike Benson – Journeyman Lineman  
Brad Braulick – Crew Chief  
Nick Bruns – Operations Assistant  
Anthony Carruth – Journeyman Lineman  
Amy Ervin – Consumer Accounts Representative  
Brayden Fischer – Journeyman Lineman  
Cindy Mertens – Administrative Services Manager  
DeeAnne Newville – CEO  
Brandon Ochs – Journeyman Lineman  
Clint Olson – Journeyman Lineman  
Lenae Wordes – Communications Manager

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: *Renville-Sibley Cooperative Connections*, PO Box 68, Danube, MN 56230; Telephone (320) 826-2593; Toll Free 1-800-826-2593; Fax (320) 826-2679;

Web site: [www.renville-sibley.coop](http://www.renville-sibley.coop)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



# Scholarships to be Awarded

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association will be offering \$4,000 in scholarship money to students in this region. The scholarships are for the 2019-2020 school year.

Renville-Sibley is allocated a \$1,000 scholarship from Basin Electric to be awarded at the discretion of the cooperative. Another \$1,000 scholarship is from Renville-Sibley.

A committee of Renville-Sibley board members, as well as an employee of the cooperative, will select the recipients of the \$1,000 Basin Scholarship and the \$1,000 Renville-Sibley Scholarship. These scholarships will be awarded based on a combination of SAT/ACT scores and overall grade-point average, work experiences, participation in school and community activities, a personal statement of career goals and a written recommendation by a third party. Additional consideration will be given to applicants interested in a position related to the electric industry for the Renville-Sibley scholarship.

The remaining two, \$1,000 scholarships are distributed from uncashed capital credit checks and is awarded by a **random drawing** at the annual meeting from the remaining completed applications.

All scholarship applicants must be U.S. citizens and a dependent of a member of Renville-Sibley Cooperative. They must be a high school senior who plans to enroll as a full-time student in an undergraduate

course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. Applications will be accepted until Feb. 20, 2019. Winners will be announced to the public at the cooperative's annual meeting on March 28, 2019.

Renville-Sibley participates with other Minnesota electric cooperatives in sponsoring the continuation of the Jay York Scholarship. York was a Lake Wilson farmer who dedicated his life to the rural electric program and to education in rural Minnesota. He was the first Minnesotan to serve as president of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Scholarships are available each year from this program and are selected by random drawing. Each participating cooperative may submit one candidate's name for the drawing. The amount of this scholarship is determined based on the number of cooperatives that participate in the program. Over the past 20 years, Renville-Sibley has awarded eight Jay York scholarships.

Only one completed application is required for an applicant to be considered a candidate for any of the available scholarships. Incomplete applications will be excluded. For more information and a scholarship application form, contact Renville-Sibley at 1-800-826-2593 or 826-2593. Application forms are also available at our web site [www.renville-sibley.coop](http://www.renville-sibley.coop).

## Generator Safety

Portable generators can provide a good, temporary source of power during electrical outages, but can become deadly if improperly installed or operated.

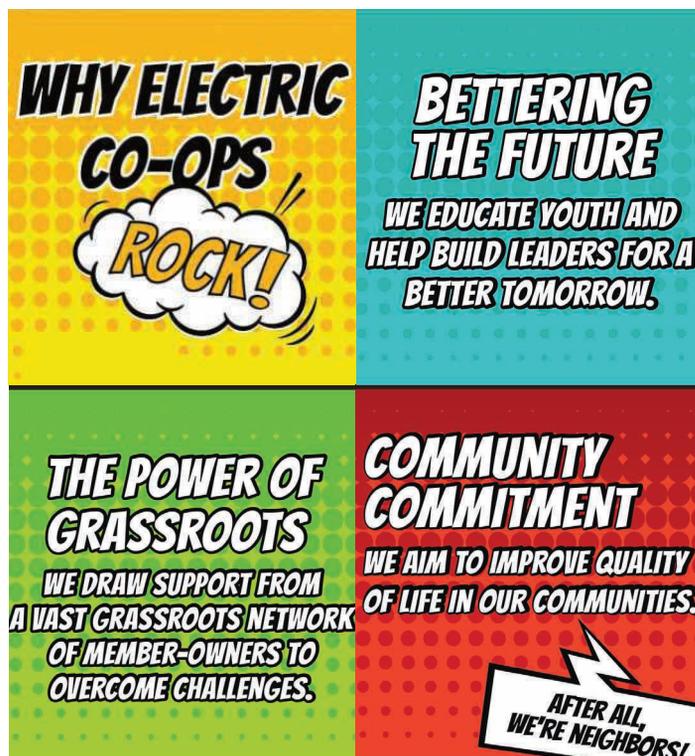
### Generator Installation Safety Tips

- The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) strongly recommends that a licensed electrician install home generators to ensure they meet all local electrical codes.
- Do not connect generators directly to the household wiring without an appropriate transfer switch installed. Power from generators connected directly to household wiring can backfeed along power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including utility lineworkers making repairs.
- Make sure your generator is properly grounded.
- Use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to prevent electrocutions and electrical shock injuries. Portable GFCIs require no tools to install and are available at prices ranging from \$12 to \$30.

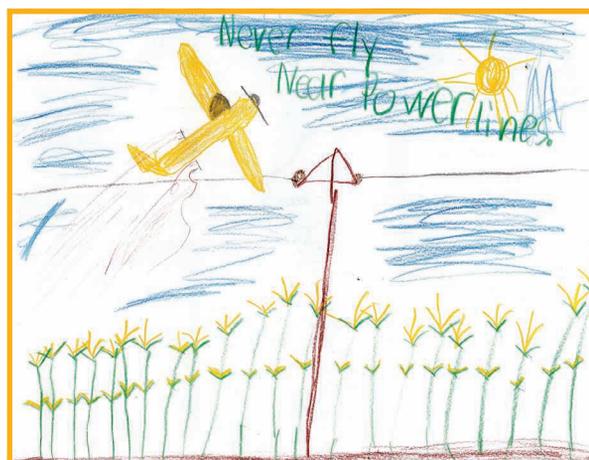
### Using Your Generator Safely

- Make sure your home is equipped with a battery-operated or battery back-up carbon monoxide alarm.
- Never operate a generator inside your home or in other enclosed or partially-enclosed spaces. Generators can very quickly produce high levels of carbon monoxide (CO), which can be deadly.
- Opening doors and windows or operating fans to attempt to ventilate a generator will not prevent carbon monoxide build-up in the home. Even with a working CO alarm, you should never use a gasoline-powered generator inside your home or in a garage.
- Position the generator outside the home and away from doors, windows and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.
- Carbon monoxide is the “silent killer.” Get to fresh air right away if you feel dizzy or weak.
- Do not overload the generator.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy-duty, outdoor rated extension cord.
- Make sure extension cords used with generators are rated for the load and have three-pronged plugs. They should be inspected for damage, such as cuts and/or worn insulation before use.
- Turn off all appliances powered by the generator before shutting down the generator.
- Make sure fuel for the generator is stored safely, away from living areas, in properly labeled containers, and away from fuel-burning appliances. Before re-fueling, always turn the generator off and let it cool down.
- Keep children away from portable generators at all times.
- A generator is a temporary power source. Use a generator only when necessary to power essential equipment or appliances.

Source:esfi.org



## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



**“Never fly near power lines.”**

**Cooper VanderWal, 8 years old**

Cooper is the son of Thomas and Katy VanderWal, Brookings, S.D. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, S.D.

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

# Super Soups

## Male Chauvinist Chili

6 slices bacon	1 tsp. dry hot mustard
10 oz. hot Italian sausage	1-1/2 tsp. chili pepper
10 oz. lean ground beef	1 tsp. celery seeds
1 large Spanish onion, cut in chunks	1/2 tsp. salt
1 bell pepper, cut in large pieces	1-1/2 tsp. fresh black pepper
2 cloves garlic, minced	6 cups Italian tomatoes, mashed with liquid
1/2 jalapeno pepper, diced (optional)	1 (15 oz.) can pinto beans, undrained
1 cup dark red wine	1 (15 oz.) can kidney beans, undrained
1/2 cup Worcestershire sauce	1 (15 oz.) can garbanzo beans, undrained

Brown bacon; drain, crumble and set aside. Brown sausage and ground beef separately; set aside. In a Dutch oven, cook onion, bell pepper, garlic and jalapeno pepper over low heat 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in wine and Worcestershire sauce; simmer uncovered for 10 minutes. Add mustard, chili pepper, celery seeds, salt and pepper; simmer 10 minutes. Add tomatoes and meats to onion mixture; heat to boiling. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in beans; heat to boiling; Reduce heat, cover and simmer 1 hour, stirring occasionally.

**Ruth Schilberg, Viborg**

## Bacon Potato Chowder

8 slices bacon, cut-up	Salt and pepper to taste
1 cup chopped onion	1/2 cup sour cream
1 cup chopped celery	1-1/2 cups milk
2 medium potatoes, peeled and diced	1 (10 oz.) can cream of mushroom soup
1 cup chicken broth	

In a saucepan, cook bacon, onion and celery until bacon is lightly browned and vegetables are tender. Pour off drippings. Add diced potatoes, broth, salt and pepper. Cover; simmer 12 to 15 minutes until potatoes are done. Stir in soup, sour cream and milk; heat through. Serves 6.

**Mary Jessen, Holabird**

## Leftover Turkey-Sage Noodle Soup

2 tsp. oil	1-1/2 tsp. sage, rubbed
1 cup chopped onion	1/2 tsp. thyme leaves
1 (32 oz.) container Kitchen Basics® Original Chicken or Turkey Stock	2 bay leaves
2 cups frozen peas and carrots	1 cup medium egg noodles
	2 cups chopped roast turkey

Heat oil in large saucepan on medium heat. Add onion; cook and stir 5 minutes or until softened. Add stock, peas and carrots, sage, thyme and bay leaves; bring to boil. Stir in noodles; cover and cook 10 minutes or until noodles are almost tender. Add turkey; cook 5 to 10 minutes or until noodles are tender and turkey is heated through. Remove bay leaves before serving. Makes 5 1-cup servings.

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 209, Total Fat 5g, Protein 24g, Cholesterol 69mg, Sodium 444mg, Carbohydrates 17g, Fiber 3g*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Dill Pickle Soup

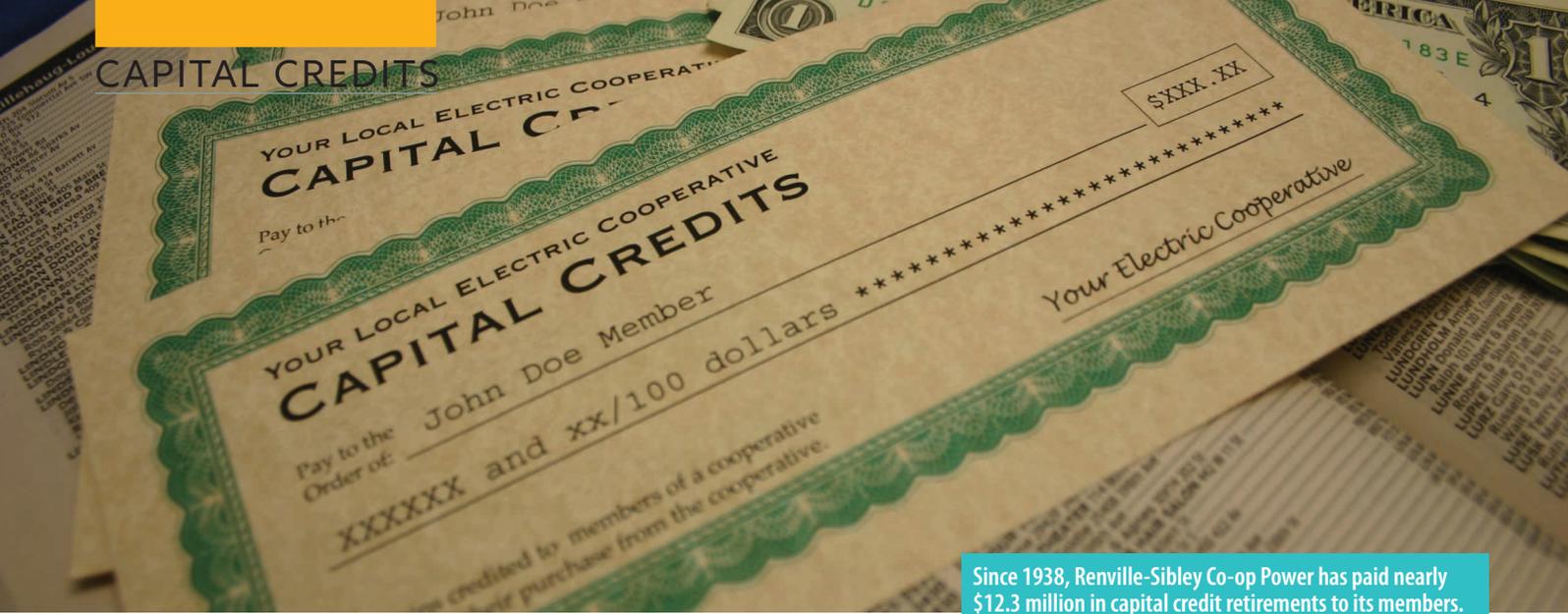
5-1/2 cups chicken broth	1/2 cup flour
2 lbs. potatoes, peeled and diced	1 cup sour cream or Greek yogurt
2 cups chopped carrots	1/4 cup water
1/2 cup unsalted butter	2 cups pickle juice
1 cup diced dill pickles	Salt to taste
1/2 cup cooked, diced chicken	1/2 tsp. pepper

Bring chicken broth, potatoes, carrots and butter to a boil. Continue until potatoes and carrots are tender. Add pickles and diced chicken; continue to simmer. In a small bowl, whisk together flour, sour cream and water. Quickly stir into soup to thicken. Add pickle juice, salt and pepper. Continue cooking an additional 5 minutes.

**Catherine Harts, Mission Hill, SD**

Please send your favorite brunch, seafood, appetizer/ beverage recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2019. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

## CAPITAL CREDITS



Since 1938, Renville-Sibley Co-op Power has paid nearly \$12.3 million in capital credit retirements to its members.

# RENVILLE-SIBLEY BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE CAPITAL CREDIT RETIREMENT

DeeAnne Newville, CEO

dnewville@renville-sibley.coop

At the October board meeting, the board of directors of Renville-Sibley Cooperative approved the disbursement of just over \$428,000 in capital credits to current and past members. This year, members from 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2017 will receive a capital credit retirement.

The credit will be applied on the December statement. Checks will be issued to inactive members who have a capital credit balance in the years being retired. Roughly 1,500 members will receive a credit on their electric statement and approximately 650

inactive members will receive a check.

This retirement reflects a general retirement of capital credits for the following: 100 percent of 1997, 1998 and 1999 Basin Electric patronage and 36.9 percent of 2000 Basin Electric patronage along with 61.6 percent of 2017 Renville-Sibley patronage. 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, operating revenue remaining at the end of the year. Later, as financial condition permits, these allocated amounts – capital credits – are retired. Capital credits represent the most significant source of equity for Renville-Sibley. Since a cooperative’s members are also the people the co-op serves, capital credits reflect each member’s ownership in, and contribution of capital 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 money to pay operating costs and meet loan covenants. 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.

## I did not get electric service from Renville-Sibley in 1997, 1998, 1999 or 2000; will I get any retirement?

**Maybe.** Although you will not receive a retirement from 1997, 1998, 1999 or 2000, you will receive a retirement if you purchased electric service in 2017.

## How much has Renville-Sibley paid in total capital credit retirements since it began in 1938?

Renville-Sibley will have paid just under \$12.3 million in capital credit retirements to current and former members by the end of this year.

## How often do members receive capital credit retirements?

The board of directors makes a decision 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.

## What if I have moved?

If you move or no longer have electric service with Renville-Sibley, 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 are entitled to 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.

## 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 our communications manager, Lenae Wordes, at [lwordes@renville-sibley.coop](mailto:lwordes@renville-sibley.coop) for instructions. All donated capital credit retirements will be designated to our scholarship fund and will be awarded at the following annual meeting to students in our local communities.

Comparative Report			
	Current (through Oct. 31)	One Year Ago (through Oct. 31)	10 Years Ago (through Oct. 31)
Average Number of Consumers	1,882	1,885	1,964
kWhs Purchased	152,361,758	135,766,413	127,653,949
Cost of Purchased Power	\$9,077,535.27	\$8,416,713.85	\$4,245,050.95

## Scholar Honored

Congratulations to Jaidyn Probst from Redwood Valley High School for being selected as the November Scholar of the Month. She was nominated because she consistently works hard in her academics to rank amongst the top of her class and is a role model to those around her. Jaidyn is involved in many school and community activities including NHS President, senior class secretary, Youth Ambassador for Lower Sioux and Young Women's Cabinet of Minnesota to name a few.



**Jaidyn Probst**  
Redwood Valley High

More information on the Scholar of the Month program can be found on our website [www.renville-sibley.coop](http://www.renville-sibley.coop) under the Customer Service tab.

## Energy Audit

Renville-Sibley offers energy audits to all members. The audit includes a walk-through of your home, taking pictures with an infrared camera of any areas where cold air might be entering your home, along with a review of the energy consumption in your home. The cost of this audit is \$150. If the member makes improvements recommended in the follow-up report and submits invoices showing that \$150 or more was spent on these improvements, the charge will be refunded. Please contact the office at 800-826-2593 if you are interested in having an energy audit of your home.

## Member Informational Meetings Scheduled

Renville-Sibley will be hosting our annual member informational meetings throughout the service area Feb. 23-28, 2019. More information about the meeting dates will be in the February issue of *Cooperative Connections*.

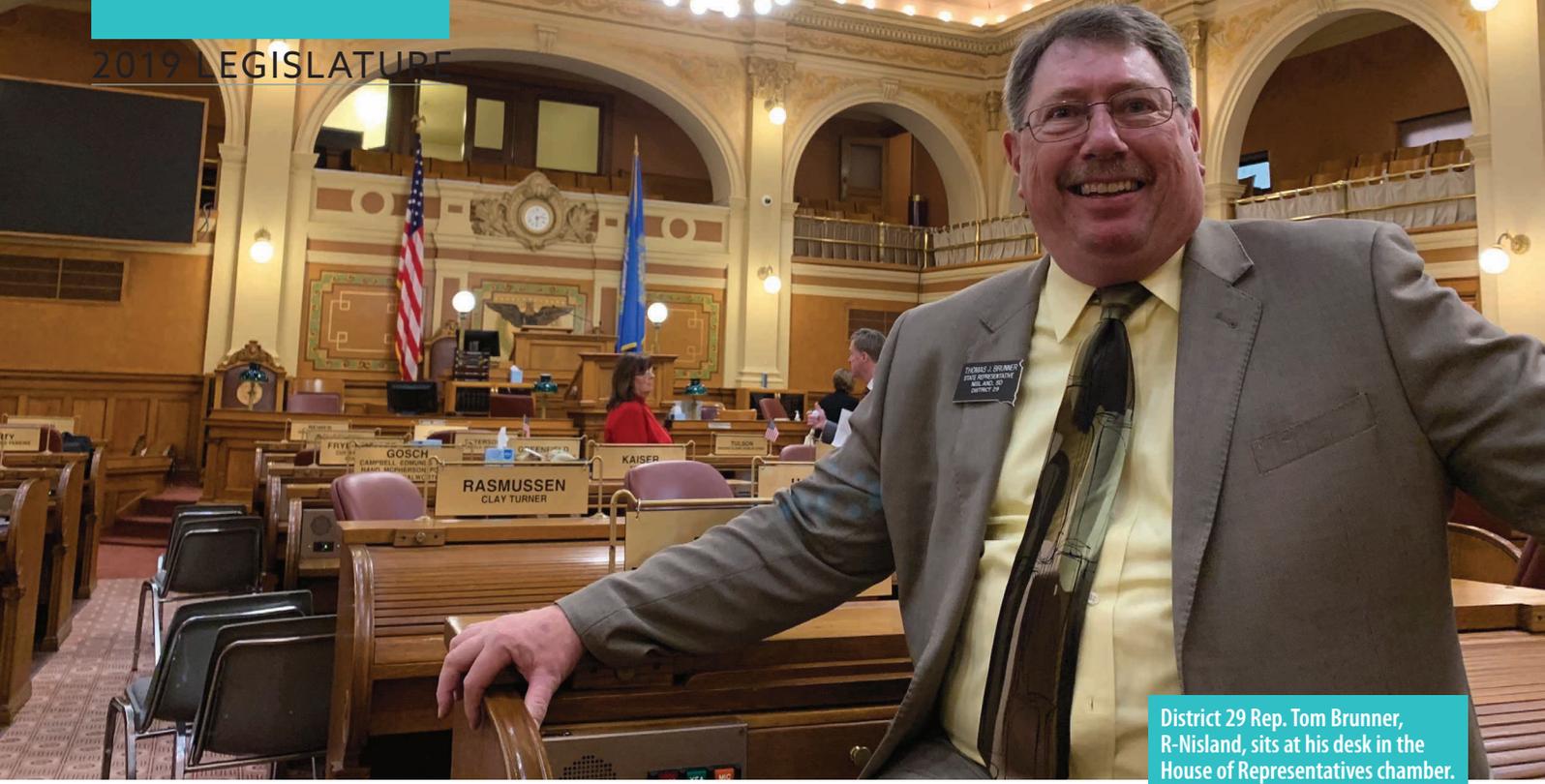
## Mission Statement

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



## Notice:

Renville-Sibley's office will be closed on Monday, Dec. 24, and Tuesday, Dec. 25, for Christmas and Monday, Dec. 31, and Tuesday, Jan. 1, for New Year's Day.



District 29 Rep. Tom Brunner, R-Nisland, sits at his desk in the House of Representatives chamber.

# UNDER THE DOME

## Co-op Leaders Elected to State Legislature

**Brenda Kleinjan**

editor@sdrea.coop

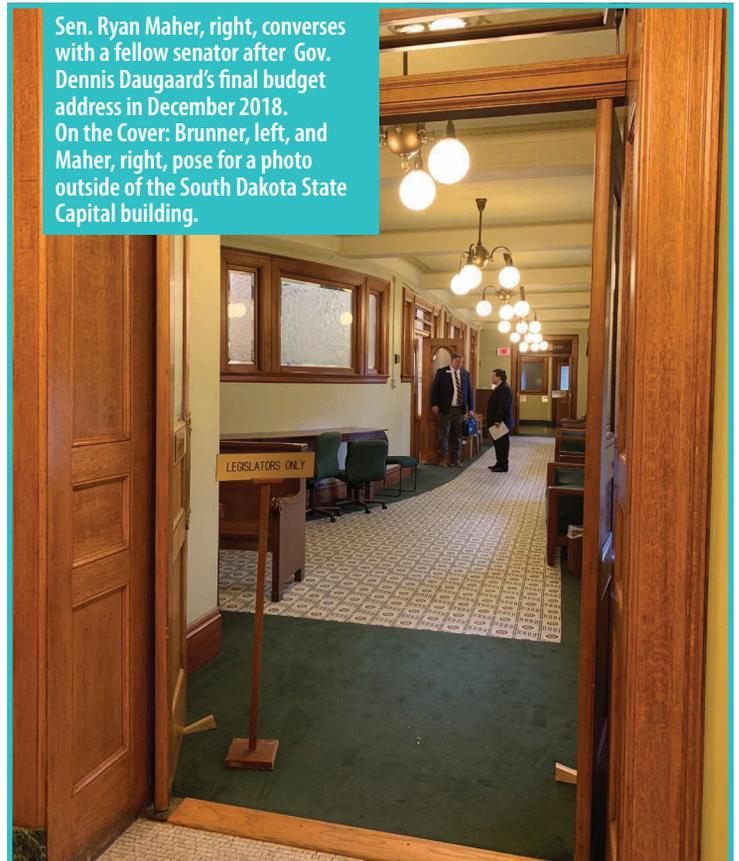
As legislators head back to Pierre Jan. 8 for the start of the 94th South Dakota Legislative Session, among the body will be a long-time electric cooperative director.

Rep. Tom Brunner, a farmer from Nisland, S.D., returns to the South Dakota House of Representatives after being re-elected to serve District 29, which encompasses portions of Butte, Meade and Pennington counties in western South Dakota. Brunner is entering his third term, having won elections in 2014 and 2016. The Republican had previously served in the House from 2005-2012, including a stint as a Majority Whip in 2007-08.

“I serve because I think it’s my way of giving back to the community. I represent a lot of people who can’t take the time or feel intimidated by speaking out in public. I hope I always bring an opinion that would make my constituents proud to have me represent them,” said Brunner.

Brunner’s service to community extends beyond the hallways of the South Dakota Capitol building. Since 1991, he has served on the Butte Electric Cooperative board of directors in Newell, S.D.

Sen. Ryan Maher, right, converses with a fellow senator after Gov. Dennis Daugaard’s final budget address in December 2018. On the Cover: Brunner, left, and Maher, right, pose for a photo outside of the South Dakota State Capital building.



# Minnesota's 91st Legislative Session to Start Jan. 8

On Jan. 8, Minnesota's elected leaders head to St. Paul for the 91st Session of the Minnesota Legislature. Coverage of the session starts at 8 a.m. Tuesday on the Minnesota Channel, which is carried by Minnesota's six independent public television stations.

Legislative television programming is produced and created by the Minnesota House of Representatives and the Minnesota Senate.

The Minnesota Legislature has 67 senators and 134 representatives for a total of 201 members. The size of the Legislature has changed over time. Since statehood the lowest number of members was 63 and the highest was 202.



Minnesota State Capitol building.

According to Minnesota Statute 3.011, the legislature meets at the seat of government on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in January of each odd-numbered year. It shall also meet when called by the governor to meet in special session. In the even numbered years, it convenes on a date set by joint agreement of both bodies. The state constitution limits the Legislature to meeting 120 legislative days during each biennium. In addition, the Legislature may not meet in regular session after the first Monday following the third Saturday in May of any year.

## Contact Minnesota Legislators

**For contact information on Minnesota House members, visit:**

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members/hmem.asp>

**For contact information on Minnesota Senators, visit:**

<http://www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/members/index.php?ls=%20-%20header>

And, Brunner has the distinction of being the longest-serving member of the South Dakota Rural Electric Association board of directors, having represented Butte Electric on the SDREA board since 1994. Brunner was the ninth individual to serve as the SDREA board president in the association's 77 year history, serving from 2001 to 2006.

On the other side of the Capitol building, Sen. Ryan Maher of Isabel is returning to the Senate representing District 28 in northwestern South Dakota. District 28 is the state's largest district geographically, extending from the Missouri River to the Montana state line. It includes Harding, Perkins, Corson, Dewey and Ziebach counties and much of northern and western Butte County. Like Brunner, Maher was a familiar face in Pierre prior to his re-election in November. Maher first served in the South Dakota Senate from 2009 to 2014 before returning in 2017. He served as the Republican assistant majority leader in 2018.

The bar and grill owner and insurance agent from Isabel is also a director on his local electric cooperative board. Maher was elected in

2017 to the Timber Lake, S.D.-based Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative board of directors.

Also on the House side is District 26A Rep. Shawn Bordeaux, D-Mission. Bordeaux, who is the Director of the Institute of Tribal Lands at Sinte Gleska University, serves on the board of directors for Cherry-Todd Electric Cooperative in Mission. This is Bordeaux's third term in the House where he represents Todd and Mellette counties in south central South Dakota.

The South Dakota Legislature is bicameral, consisting of a Senate, comprised of 35 members, and a House of Representatives with 70 members.

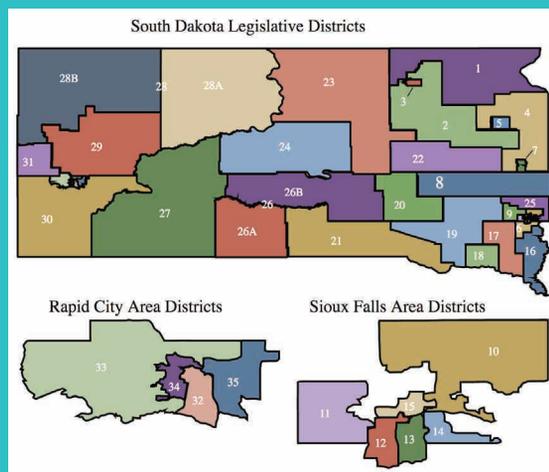
The main run of the 40-day legislative session goes through March 13. Lawmakers return to Pierre March 29 to consider gubernatorial vetoes.



Rep. Shawn Bordeaux  
D-Mission

## South Dakota's Legislature

Each Legislative District in South Dakota is represented in Pierre by two members in the South Dakota House of Representatives and one Senator. (Districts 26 and 28 are split into an A portion and a B portion, with a specific Representative for that area.) Need to contact your legislator while they're in Pierre? Go to <http://sdlegislature.gov/> From there, you can search your Senator or Representatives, see the committees which they are assigned and send them an email. Need to reach them by phone? You can call and leave a message with the senate at 605-773-3821 or with the House of Representatives at 605-773-3851. You can also send a fax to 605-773-6806.



# November Board Meeting Highlights

The November board meeting was held on Monday, Nov. 26, at 8 a.m. All board members were present. Others present were Attorney Jeff Whitmore, Attorney Jon Farnsworth, CEO DeeAnne Newville, Gene Alex and Lenae Wordes.

## The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the October board meeting
- Minutes of the Nov. 12 special board meeting
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of October
- Safety report for November
- Capital credits to an estate
- Operation Round Up® License Agreement
- Nominating Committee appointments
- MREA annual certification of voting delegates
- 2019 Update of the 2017 Load Forecast

## The board reviewed:

- List of new members and capital

credits transferred.

- RUS Form 219 – Inventory of Work Orders
- Reports from staff members as to the activities in their department. Items in the reports include:
  - High level Statement of Operations review – YTD through October 2018(unaudited)
  - Organization activities
  - East River update
  - NRECA update
  - MREA update
  - Line crew work in progress and pending work
  - Accounts receivable
  - Co-ops in the Classroom visit
  - Member Education Committee
  - Christmas Open House
  - Operation Round Up
- Upcoming meetings were discussed.

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 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 Jeff Rice did not find his member number in the newsletter. The credit will continue to grow for a value of \$20. Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by Jan. 4, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

## Outage Report

affecting 10+ members

- Date:** 11-10-18
- Time off:** 7:26 a.m.
- Time on:** 9:07 a.m.
- Substation:** Troy
- Cause:** Equipment failure
- Date:** 11-19-18
- Time off:** 3 p.m.
- Time on:** 3:27 p.m.
- Substation:** Henryville
- Cause:** Scheduled outage

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

## MSM Phones for Sale

Renville-Sibley has for sale phones that were used as part of the MainStreet Messenger service. These phones have larger buttons that light up and the option of four numbers to be programmed into the phone. The phones cost \$10 each (wrist band not included). The phones are sold as is and do not include any warranty or replacement value. Please contact the office if interested.

**Notice: The December board meeting will be held Thursday, Dec. 20, at 9 a.m. The January board meeting will be held on Monday, Jan. 28, at 8 a.m.**



Jennifer Gross, back right, poses with Mrs. Elferings' second graders at RCW as the students gather around the Power Town demonstration used to teach electrical safety.

# CO-OPS IN THE CLASSROOM

**Lenae Wordes**  
 lwordes@renville-sibley.coop

Has anyone created static electricity today? This is usually one of the first questions Jenny Gross, communications coordinator for East River Electric, asks each group of fourth grade students. Gross clarifies her question by saying, "Have you created static electricity, not used electricity." After giving an example of static electricity, many hands fly up in the air to share their story of how they have made static electricity. These stories include jumping on a trampoline, going down a slide and rubbing a balloon on their head. Gross goes on to discuss protons, electrons and how static electricity is made.

This discussion took place when Jenny Gross and I had visited the fourth-grade students at Renville County West, BOLD and Redwood Valley where we presented the Co-ops in the Classroom program. The goal of this program is to teach students about electricity, generating electricity and being safe around electricity. The second-grade students at Renville County West learned about safety around overhead and underground power lines.

Most students learn best with hands-on activities. One of the demonstrations included a Van de Graaff generator. This hair-raising demonstration clearly showed the movement of electrons by causing the students hair to stand on end along with the opportunity to give their friends a shock. Most students raise their hands to volunteer for this activity.

Another device that invokes a lot of excitement is the Pedal Power bicycle generator. Students are asked to become power plants as they provide the energy for lights and small household devices. Students quickly learn that the more devices that are plugged into the bicycle's generator, the harder it is to peddle. In one of the activities, the student riding the bicycle is tasked with generating enough power to turn on different types of light bulbs. The student quickly learns that it takes more peddle power to light an incandescent light bulb that it does to power a CFL. LED light bulbs are the easiest to power. Gross encourages students to share this information with their parents and encouraged everyone to conserve energy by using LED light bulbs.

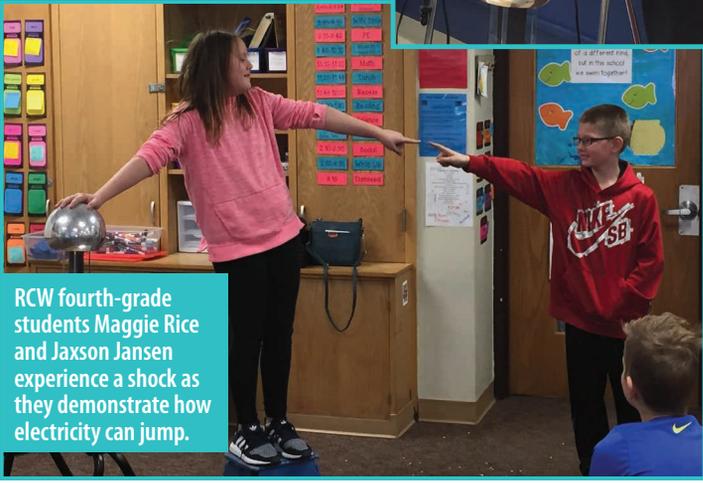


Jenny Gross tries to cool off BOLD student Jazmine Dahl as she pedals to generate power for the fan.

By the end of the presentation, students had developed a new understanding and appreciation for electricity. I thank the schools for allowing us the opportunity to come into their classroom to talk about electricity.



Redwood Valley student Zack Lundeen has a hair-raising experience when touching the Van de Graaff generator.



RCW fourth-grade students Maggie Rice and Jaxson Jansen experience a shock as they demonstrate how electricity can jump.

# An Outlet for Energy Savings

## Smart Outlets Offer Savings

Kaley Lockwood

NRECA

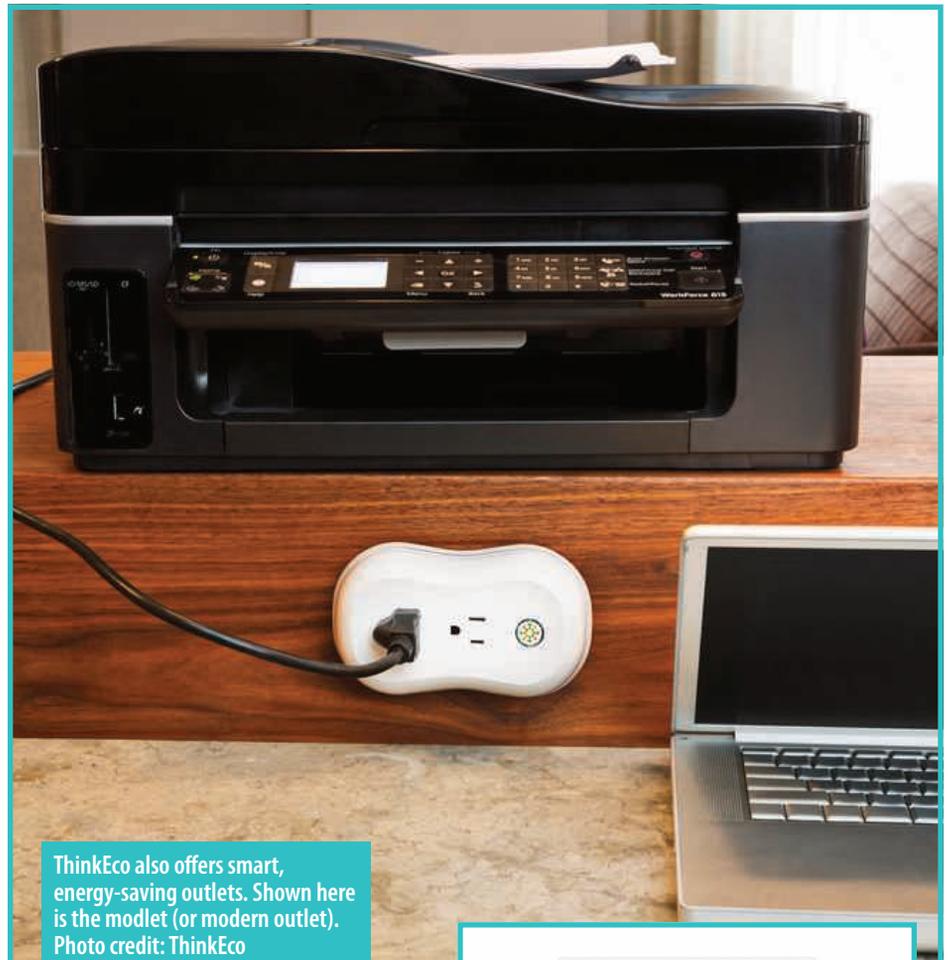
**These devices afford the same surge protection as their predecessors, but also tie in the “smart” functionality of an internet-connected device.**

Does the ebb and flow of your energy bill have you searching for an affordable way to reduce or better control your use? If you answered yes, then look no further because we’re taking a quick dive into a practical and affordable device that allows you to better manage your home’s energy use. We’re talking about energy-saving outlets!

These next-generation devices afford the same surge protection as their predecessors, but also tie in the “smart” functionality of an internet-connected device.

There are several different kinds of energy-saving outlets available, but there are two factors you should consider. First is size; there are many different sizes ranging from a single external outlet to a power strip with multiple sockets. The second thing you’ll want to consider is Wi-Fi connectivity; internet-connected outlets, commonly known as smart plugs, may enable you to fully realize the potential of these energy savings. This is because you’ll have greater remote control of the outlet through your smart phone, tablet or home assistant (like Google Home or Amazon’s Alexa).

You’ll also want to consider where you’ll be



ThinkEco also offers smart, energy-saving outlets. Shown here is the modlet (or modern outlet). Photo credit: ThinkEco

using the energy-saving outlet and what you’ll be using it for. Answering these questions will make it easier to choose the device that works best for you.

With smart plugs or smart power strips, a few clicks and swipes on your smart phone will enable you to fully shut down the electrical currents to your high-powered devices to prevent them from consuming electricity even when switched off. Several devices found inside your home are commonly referred to as “parasitic loads,” “phantom loads” or “energy vampires.” In fact, most entertainment systems consist of several parasitic loads, such as televisions, DVD players and video gaming consoles. These outlets can potentially curb these loads, which can cost the average household an extra \$200 per year.

In addition to preventing unnecessary



The Insteon® On/Off Outlet is one of many options for smart, energy-saving outlets. Photo credit: Insteon®



ThinkEco's modlet (or modern outlet) can be controlled remotely and even adjust to your personal schedule. Photo credit: ThinkEco

**Convenience is also a major factor to consider when thinking about your next efficiency upgrade.**

energy consumption, these energy-saving outlets are affordable for most folks who are looking to trim their use. The average smart outlet costs around \$10 to \$20 on Amazon.com and has the potential to pay for itself within two years or less depending on how often you use it.

As previously noted, convenience is also a major factor to consider when thinking about your next efficiency upgrade. Smart plugs typically come with simple instructions to download an accompanying app on your smart phone and then connect the plug to your home's Wi-Fi. The convenience in being able to turn the device on and off using your phone cannot be understated. Advanced smart plugs and smart plug apps also have the ability to automate the use with your schedule and even your presence in the home.

You can also have large-load devices turn off at a set time each night and turn on

every morning when you're ready to use them. If you want to use your television, for example, at a time that's outside of the preset hours, you can easily switch the device on through the smart phone app. Through automation, you're able to power down these energy-intensive devices and prevent unnecessary energy use.

For folks who are looking to optimize their energy use and eliminate vampire loads, smart plugs may be your best option. For others who want more of a hands-off option to save additional dollars, energy-saving outlets and power strips without the Wi-Fi connection may be a better choice.

Either way, energy-saving outlets are just one of many energy efficient options out there and as technology continues to evolve, we'll likely see additional options emerge in the future.

*Kaley Lockwood writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation's landscape.*



The Insteon® On/Off Outlet outlets can be controlled remotely, but consumers will need to purchase the Insteon Hub first, which costs about \$40. Photo credit: Insteon®

# Are You Interested in a New Adventure?

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association is beginning to plan for the 81st annual meeting of the membership that will be held March 28, 2019, at the Island Ballroom in Bird Island, Minn. Three (3) directors will be elected during that time, each for a three-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 Philip Nestande. Whitey Hinderman's term will expire in 2019.

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 Matt Haubrich. Wayland Zaske's term will expire in 2019.

The Third District, consisting of the townships of Roseland and Holland in Kandiyohi County, Rheiderland in Chippewa County and the townships of Troy, Winfield, Emmet, Crooks, Sacred Heart, Hawk Creek, Ericson and Wang in Renville County is represented by Steve Benson, Gary Peterson and Roger Manthei. Steve Benson's term will expire in 2019.

Contact the Renville-Sibley Co-op Power office for more information on running for the board of directors.

## As stated in the Renville-Sibley bylaws, 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 five 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 Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.
- Attend regular and special Board meetings of the Cooperative.
- Attend, when appointed, committee meeting 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

# TEENS:

## You Could Win a Trip to D.C.

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 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 Monday of every month, beginning at 9 a.m. in December, January and February and beginning at 8 a.m. the rest of the year. 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 Jan. 11 for further information.

Each year, rural electric cooperatives across the nation sponsor roughly 1,900 students on the Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington D.C. The youth tour program continues to foster the grassroots spirit of the rural electric cooperatives by demonstrating to high school juniors and seniors how our government works and what the electric cooperative business model is all about. The past three years, Renville-Sibley has sponsored Megan Hoff, Amy Albrecht and Andrew Black as our Youth Tour delegates.

In 2019, Renville-Sibley will be sending one high school junior or senior on an all-expenses-paid trip to the Washington, D.C., Youth Tour. The selected student will spend six days in our nation's capital visiting museums, chatting with politicians and making memories and friends that will last a lifetime. What is the best part of this trip? The best part is the fact that Renville-Sibley will pay all of the expenses.

More information and how to apply can be found below.

### Contest purpose:

Select one youth to represent Renville-Sibley Co-op Power at the Washington D.C. Youth Tour.

### Eligibility:

The contest is open to any current high school junior or senior whose family is a member of our cooperative.

### Requirements:

Contestant shall write a 300-word essay on "What makes you a good candidate to represent Renville-Sibley Co-op on the 2019 Youth Tour and what do you expect to gain from your Washington, D.C. experience?"

Complete a Youth Tour application form which can be found on Renville-Sibley's web site at [www.renville-sibley.coop](http://www.renville-sibley.coop).

### Additional Information:

- Deadline for application is Feb. 20.
- The winner will be announced by March 11, 2019.



- Tour Dates: June 15-20, 2019.

### Sample itinerary (subject to change):

- **Saturday, June 15**
  - Travel day
  - Electric Cooperatives 101 class
- **Sunday, June 16:**
  - Walking tour of monuments, Arlington Cemetery, Smithsonians, night monument tour
- **Monday, June 17:**
  - Mount Vernon, National Museum of the Marine Corp, Old Town Alexandria and NRECA Youth night
- **Tuesday, June 18:**
  - Group picture in front of White House, Newseum, National Achieves, Smithsonian's, Holocaust Museum, John F Kennedy Center Performing Arts Center show
- **Wednesday, June 19:**
  - Library of Congress, U.S. Capitol tour, visit the Galleries, Capitol visits with Senators and Representatives, U.S. Botanical Gardens, Souvenir City
  - NRECA dinner and dance
- **Thursday, June 20:**
  - Travel day

More information can be found at the National Youth Tour website <http://youthtour.coop>

## October 20-January 6

Pheasant Hunting Season, Statewide, Pierre, SD, 605-223-7660

## November 20-December 26

Christmas at the Capitol, Pierre, SD, 605-773-3178

## December 15-March 31

South Dakota snowmobile trails season, Lead, SD, 605-584-3896

## December 22-23

1880 Train Holiday Express, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

## January 3-5

Dakota Farm Show, Thursday and Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Dakota Dome, Vermillion, SD

## January 11-12

Annual Red Dirt Festival, Deadwood, SD, 605-559-0386

## January 15

40th Annual Ranchers Workshop, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. CT, Community Events Center, White River, SD, 605-259-3252 ext. 3

## January 17

Community Club Annual Banquet, Dinner catered by The Knotty Pine Supper Club, Entertainment by Comedian Scott Novotny, Elkton, SD Tickets 605-542-2681

## January 18-19

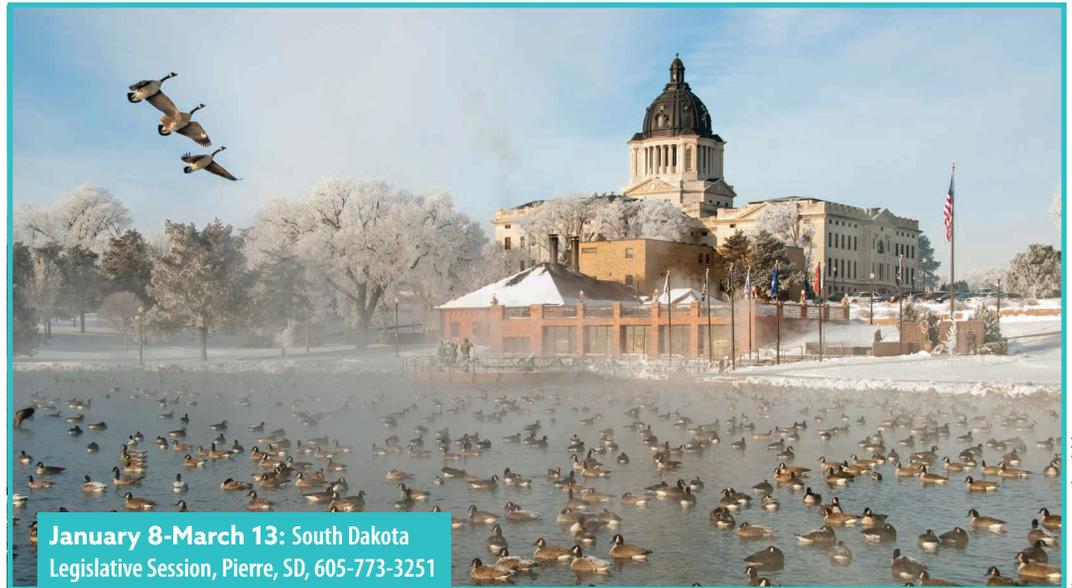
Media One Funski, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-339-0000

## January 18-20

Winterfest, Lead, SD, 605-584-1100

## January 25-26

Snowmobile Rally, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876



## January 25-26

Living History Fair, Lake Area Technical College, School children only on Friday, Open to public on Saturday, Watertown, SD, 605-881-1758

## January 25-February 3

Annual Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo, Rapid City, SD, 605-355-3861

## January 26-27

Dakota Territory Gun Show, National Field Archery Building, Yankton, SD, 605-665-4537

## February 2

Lake Hendricks Fishing Derby, Hendricks, MN, 507-828-2113

## February 2-3

Dakota Territory Gun Show, Dakota Event Center, Aberdeen, SD, 701-336-7533

## February 8-10

Black Hills Sports Show & Outdoor Expo, Rapid City, SD, 605-939-1812

## February 9-10

Dakota Territory Gun Show, Trophy Show - The Big One, Convention Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-630-2199

## February 16-17

Dakota Territory Gun Show, Ramkota River Centre, Pierre, SD, 605-280-2438

## February 21-23

Sno Jam Comedy Festival, Sioux Falls, SD, siouxfallssnojamcomedyfest@gmail.com

## February 22-23

State Wrestling Tournaments, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

## March 1-2

Mardi Gras Weekend, Main Street, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

## March 9-10

2019 Gun Show, American Legion Hall, Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. MST, Philip, SD, 605-441-8466 or 605-441-1216

## March 9-12

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

## March 15-16

28 Below Fatbike Race, Lead, SD, 605-584-3435

## March 29-30, April 5-6

Annual Schmeckfest, Freeman, SD, 605-925-4237

## April 5-6

Forks, Corks and Kegs Food, Wine and Beer Festival, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

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.