

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Power on Wheels

**Solar Power
Education**

Pages 8-9

Flipping the Switch

Pages 12-13

Members of Sioux Valley Energy's Beneficial Electrification Department install panels on a 50 kW community solar array at the Sioux Valley Energy Colman office.

Registration Open for Basin Tour 2023

Lake Region Electric Association, Inc. is ready to hit the road with our members! Back by popular demand is the Basin Tour! Lake Region members can now register for an enjoyable tour to Basin Electric Cooperative's Antelope Valley Station in North Dakota. The Basin Tour is open to active, adult members of Lake Region Electric.

The tour will be held September 19th & 20th. There is minimal cost to our members; only \$25 per couple! The registrant for the tour must be an active member of Lake Region Electric Association. This small fee will be added to the registrant's September electric bill. Lake Region Electric provides transpor-

tation via coach charter bus, all meals and overnight accommodation (double occupancy) for one night!

Tour Highlights:

- Wilton Windfarm
- Dakota Gasification Plant
- Antelope Valley Station
- Freedom Coal Mine

We encourage our members to seize this opportunity to participate in a fun-filled and informative couple of days! See firsthand where our power comes from and how it gets to your homes and businesses. Register today to be assured a

space for this exciting opportunity. Reservations are limited and on a first come, first served basis.

If you would like further information regarding a planned tour of Basin Electric, contact Manager of Member Services Brett Kwasniewski 605-345-3379 or by email: bkwasniewski@lakeregion.coop.

Basin Electric Member Tour

September 19 – 20th

Return Form to Lake Region Electric Association

By mail Att.: Basin Tour, PO Box 341, Webster, SD 57274
or email: lakeregion@lakeregion.coop

Members attending the trip will be billed a one-time charge of \$25 on September's electric bill. Cancellations must be made at least one week prior to the trip, or you will be charged. Exceptions will be made for emergency or allowable circumstances at the discretion of the Manager of Member Services.

Reservations are limited and on a first come first served basis.

LREA Member Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Guest Name _____

Guest Address _____

(if different than LREA member)

Email _____ Phone _____

Pick-Up Location

(Please Circle the location you will be getting on the bus.)

Webster
7:00 a.m.

Bristol
7:15 a.m.

Groton
7:45 a.m.



For questions, Contact: Manager of Member Services
Brett Kwasniewski 605-345-3379 or by email:
bkwasniewski@lakeregion.coop

Welcome to our new members!

AM Metz LLC

Schlekewy Trust

Tanner & Christina
Christensen

Kerry Sturm

Leila & Nathaniel
Oberg

Dan Brake

COOPERATIVE

CONNECTIONS

LAKE REGION ELECTRIC RIPPLES

(USPS 018-904)

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LAKE REGION RIPPLES COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of Lake Region Electric Association, Inc., PO Box 341, 1212 N Main St., Webster, SD 57274. Lake Region Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to members on electric cooperative matters and better living.

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24 hour Dispatching/Outage Line
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Manager's Column



Tim McIntyre
General Manager

Thank you to all who came to our annual meeting. This marks 82 years that we have been getting together to talk about our co-op. In the past, the annual meeting was something more than just business, this was a big deal; a time to get together and visit with our neighbors just to say "Hello, how are you?" This year's annual meeting proved that it is still a wonderful opportunity that our members look forward to so that they can get together.

A few years ago, we faced some adversity, and we weren't able to get together like we traditionally do but we still made things happen. While discussions and planning were taking

place for this year's meeting, different meal options were discussed, and it was decided that the meal voucher program that we started with the pandemic would be the best route to go. Lake Region employees served snacks, including real movie popcorn from the Strand Theater in Britton.

I would like to recognize the efforts of the employees of Lake Region Electric. A lot of planning and hard work goes into pulling off an event like our annual meeting. We really do have the best group of employees working for you!

Thank you to the City of Britton for hosting us at the Britton Event Center. What a wonderful facility! Commitment to Community is one of our core principles and Lake Region Electric, as part of our charitable giving and a match from Basin Electric helped fund the building of this facility and we are proud of this opportunity to support the communities in our service territory!

I am truly grateful for the member-owners of Lake Region Electric Association, and I just want to thank you all for supporting your local electric cooperative. It was great seeing so many familiar faces, and a few new ones at our annual meeting!

Thank you & God Bless,
Timothy McIntyre



Fireworks Safety Tips

Summer is synonymous with barbecues, parades and fireworks. The National Safety Council advises everyone to enjoy fireworks at public displays conducted by professionals, and not to use any fireworks at home. They may be legal but they are not safe.

In 2017, eight people died and over 12,000 were injured badly enough to require medical treatment after fireworks-related incidents. Of these, 50% of the injuries were to children and young adults under age 20. Over two-thirds (67%) of injuries took place from June 16 to July 16. And while the majority of these incidents were due to amateurs attempting to use professional-grade, homemade or other illegal fireworks or explosives, an estimated 1,200 injuries were from less powerful devices like small firecrackers and sparklers.

Additionally, fireworks start an average of 18,500 fires each year, including 1,300 structure fires, 300 vehicle fires and nearly 17,000 other fires.

Fireworks Safety Tips: If You Choose to Use Legal Fireworks

If consumer fireworks are legal to buy where you live and you choose to use them, be sure to follow the following safety tips:

- Never allow young children to handle fireworks
- Older children should use them only under close adult supervision
- Never use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol
- Anyone using fireworks or standing nearby should wear protective eyewear
- Never hold lighted fireworks in your hands
- Never light them indoors
- Only use them away from people, houses and flammable material
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person
- Only light one device at a time and maintain a safe distance after lighting
- Never ignite devices in a container
- Do not try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks
- Soak both spent and unused fireworks in water for a few hours before discarding

- Keep a bucket of water nearby to fully extinguish fireworks that don't go off or in case of fire
- Never use illegal fireworks

Sparklers Are Dangerous

Every year, young children can be found along parade routes and at festivals with sparklers in hand, but sparklers are a lot more dangerous than most people think.

Sparklers burn at about 2,000 degrees – hot enough to melt some metals. Sparklers can quickly ignite clothing, and children have received severe burns from dropping sparklers on their feet. According to the National Fire Protection Association, sparklers alone account for more than 25% of emergency room visits for fireworks injuries. For children under five years of age, sparklers accounted for nearly half of the total estimated injuries. Consider using safer alternatives, such as glow sticks, confetti poppers or colored streamers.



Call Before You Dig!

Dixie Koistinen

Dixie Koistinen advises diggers to call 811 before digging. This is a great tip for anyone doing construction or yard work this summer. Dixie is the daughter of Jerome and Lisa Koistinen from Lake Norden, S.D., members of H-D Electric.

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.

Summer DESSERTS

VICKY'S RHUBARB CAKE

Ingredients:

1 egg
1 cup sugar
1 cup cream (sweet or sour)
1 1/2 cups flour
1 tsp. soda
1/4 tsp. cinnamon
2 cups rhubarb (slice thin)

METHOD

Mix in order. Grease and flour pan. Pour batter into pan and sprinkle 1 cup brown sugar, 1/2 cup nuts, and 1/2 cup chocolate chips over the top. Bake at 350°F for 50 minutes.

Vicky Hoffman
South Dakota

CHERRY CLOUD 9 DESSERT

Ingredients:

1 white cake mix
1 (3 oz.) pkg. cherry jello
1 (8 oz.) carton of Cool Whip
1 (24 oz.) can cherry pie filling

METHOD

Bake 1 white cake mix in 9x13" pan according to directions. Poke holes in cake and pour in 1 (3 oz.) pkg. cherry jello made with only 1 1/2 cups water. Refrigerate.

When this is cool, cover with 1 (8 oz.) carton of Cool Whip. Gently spoon on 1 (24 oz.) can of cherry pie filling. Refrigerate and serve.

This is a pretty red and white dessert to serve during holiday gatherings.

Jane Ham
Rapid City, S.D.

EASY RASPBERRY MOLTEN CAKES

Ingredients:

4 oz. semi-sweet chocolate
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter
4 tsp. raspberry extract
1 cup confectioners' sugar
2 eggs
1 egg yolk
6 tbsp. flour
Raspberry Sauce (recipe follows)

Raspberry Sauce:

1 package (10 ounces) frozen raspberries in juice, thawed
1/2 teaspoon raspberry extract

METHOD

Preheat oven to 425°F. Butter 6 (6 oz.) custard cups or soufflé dishes. Place on baking sheet.

Microwave chocolate and butter in large microwavable bowl on HIGH 1 minute or until butter is melted. Stir with wire whisk until chocolate is completely melted. Stir in raspberry flavor and vanilla. Stir in sugar until well blended. Whisk in eggs and yolk. Stir in flour. Pour batter into prepared custard cups.

Bake 10 to 14 minutes or until sides are firm but centers are soft. Let stand 1 minute. Carefully loosen edges with small knife. Invert cakes onto serving plates.

For the Raspberry Sauce, mix raspberries and raspberry extract until well blended. Serve with cakes.

mccormick.com

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Charles Johnson Education and Training Trust Awards Two Scholarships

Charles Johnson is known for being instrumental in bringing Mereen Johnson Manufacturing to Webster when he started the Western Division of MJ in 1973. Charles Johnson cared about manufacturing and about the people who worked for him. He was all about improving business, people and the community. Furthering the legacy and community support shown to Webster by Charles Johnson, a trust was established in 2017. Honoring the memory of Charles Johnson, Russell D. McBroom, past president of Mereen Johnson Machine Company, made funds available to form The Charles Johnson Education and Training Trust. The purpose of this trust is to promote education, training, hiring and placement of persons to work and potentially begin their lifelong careers in the manufacturing and fabrication industry or trades within the Day County area.

This year, the Charles Johnson Education/Training Trust board of trustees decided to award education scholarships to Ethan Opitz and Jaiden McCreary. Both young men applied for this scholarship and were deemed to meet the spirit of the Charles Johnson Education and Training Trust. The trustees decided to award each student \$2,000 to assist them with their educational needs.

Ethan is the son of Mike and Megan Ninke of Webster. He took dual credit courses in high school with the goal of giving himself a head start on schoolwork when he attends Mitchell Technical College to study powerline

construction and maintenance. Ethan's long-term goals include returning to his hometown of Webster to work and eventually raise a family "By living in Webster, my family can have the opportunity to be a part of this great community that has supported me throughout the years." Teacher Beau Larson describes Ethan as a young man with a strong work ethic, perseverance, and determination, "Ethan is about being the best version of himself. I believe that whatever Ethan decides to do, he will be successful."

Jaiden is the son of Michael and Cheryl McCreary of Webster. Jaiden is a goal-oriented young man who has taken on many leadership roles in high school and plans to continue as a leader in the future by becoming a shop foreman or branch manager for a local bussing company. He will be attending Lake

Area Technical College's Automotive Technology program, after which he plans on returning to the Webster area. Teacher Kaylan Pool speaks highly of Jaiden's friendly personality and leadership skills, especially when it comes to encouraging his younger peers. She says, "Jaiden is destined to be successful."

The board of trustees for the Charles Johnson Education and Training Trust has confidence in each of these recipients and looks forward to seeing their leadership skills and dedication innovate their communities through technology.



Ethan Opitz (above) will attend Mitchell Technical College to study power line construction.

Jaiden McCreary (left) plans to attend Lake Area College to study Automotive Technology.

Forfeiture Notice List Given

Lake Region Electric Association, Inc. is holding unclaimed capital credit refunds of former members. Please take note that Lake Region Electric with its office at Webster, SD will forfeit patronage capital credits held by the cooperative for the following named person, institutions, partnerships and corporations unless claim is made and sufficient proof of ownership is submitted to Lake Region Electric, PO Box 341, Webster, SD 57274, (605-345-3379) on or before August 31, 2023.

The names of said persons, institutions, partnerships and corporations (as shown on the records of the cooperative) and the estimated value of money held in their name is as follows:

Brown, Doris	Lynwood WA	270.66	King, Darlene	Sisseton SD	375.10
Burkhardt, Tom	Omaha NE	150.21	Kouba, FH	Sisseton SD	322.43
Counter, Ralph	Sioux Falls SD	209.30	Kruger, Dennis	Chaska MN	771.41
Drusch, Fred	Valley Center CA	356.09	Livingston, Howard	Sioux Falls SD	419.86
Dunnihoo, Dale	Casa Grande AZ	464.87	Moen, Clark	Waubay SD	403.25
Elmiger, Robert	Youngtown AZ	236.31	Nygaard, James	Pierpont SD	313.77
Enderson, Dorn	Britton SD	265.16	Palacio, Olivia	Agency Village	799.48
Engstrom, Virginia	Waubay SD	264.57	Parker, James W	Sioux Falls SD	290.04
Fischer, Glenn	Aberdeen SD	390.21	Pizza Hut of Webster, Mario Mandolfo	Omaha NE	4,340.19
Fredrickson, Diane	Britton SD	804.51	Renville, Diane	Veblen SD	785.22
Glover, Jim	Stillwater MN	315.84	Sterzinger, Joe	Aberdeen SD	551.08
Greenhagen, Edna	Watertown SD	156.41	Tenorio, Ione	Aberdeen SD	216.66
Gunderson, Ed	Saint Paul MN	296.72	Thielen, Charles	Rapid City SD	224.93
Henschel, Tom	Brandon SD	697.56	Vrchota, Rudolph	Blaine MN	189.96
Herman, Barry	Eden SD	316.08	Washenberger, Beverly	Aberdeen SD	232.43
Herrick, James W	The Villages FL	323.99	Webb, John	Aberdeen SD	447.75
Hirsch, Jeff	Grenville SD	724.95	Widhalm, Sam	Milbank SD	172.70
Kienow, Leon	Winona MN	324.45			



POWER ON WHEELS

West Central Electric Cooperative's solar trailer serves as an interactive exhibit showcasing solar power generation in action for members. Equipped with a built-in generator, battery storage unit, inverter, and six rooftop solar arrays, the trailer is a great resource for public outreach and education efforts in South Dakota.

Solar trailer takes renewable education on the road

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Solar panels are creating a buzz in the energy industry. Every day, co-op employees around the state answer an ever-growing list of questions, such as “Can solar save me money on my energy bill?” and “Are solar panels a reliable source of energy?”

Addressing increasing public interest, West Central Electric Co-op, serving towns such as Murdo and Kennebec, has developed an innovative approach to public outreach regarding solar panels. Their solution: a solar trailer — a portable structure designed to inform the public about the efficiency, pros and cons of solar panels.

“West Central Electric has approxi-

mately 3,700 members and I get two or three calls a month from our members asking about solar power,” said Jessie Tucker, the co-op’s member services manager.

Tucker noted that the recent surge in solar power interest isn’t limited to West Central. Co-ops throughout the state have been fielding similar inquiries. So, when the concept of a solar trailer was introduced in 2021, several nearby co-ops, including Rushmore Electric Power, were quick to get on board.

“We thought, wouldn’t it be great if we had something that we could show to the membership and explain how solar panels work and go from there,” said Tucker. “We envisioned the trailer as a resource that could be utilized throughout western South Dakota, if not the entire state.”

With support from surrounding co-ops, the trailer was completed in June 2022. Although the trailer is a work in progress, it has already been showcased at several co-op outreach events over the past year, including Black Hills Electric’s Co-op Day and more.

The solar trailer serves as an interactive exhibit where members can step inside for a first-hand experience. Upon pressing a button, the six rooftop solar arrays activate and start generating a total of 1.92 kilowatts of energy directly from the trailer’s roof. Apart from solar panels, the trailer is equipped with a built-in generator, a battery storage unit, and an inverter that converts power from direct current (DC) to alternating current (AC).

The trailer, according to Tucker, highlights the benefits of a diversified approach to South Dakota’s energy mix. For a reliable and dependable energy grid, renewable sources such as solar need to be paired with other forms of power generation.

“What we are really trying to com-

municate is that you can't fully rely on distributed generation, whether it's solar or wind," Tucker explained. "For reliability and safety, it's important to consider all available energy sources. Solar power has its limitations, especially when the sun isn't shining or during the night."

The introduction of a solar trailer comes as co-ops across the state are in the midst of their own solar initiatives. Just last month, Sioux Valley Energy completed its own solar project that permits its members to purchase a 20-year subscription to the power output from a newly constructed 140-panel solar array located in Colman, S.D. The project allows members who are passionate about renewable energy a direct route to purchase solar power through their local co-op.

"A lot of people are very interested in solar power, but they don't want to go through the process of using up land and roof space," said Ben Pierson, manager of beneficial electrification for Sioux Valley. "Members aren't interested in constructing these projects themselves, so our solar

project offers those members an alternative way to get involved in solar."

More than 30 members participate in the subscription program, and because the project was entirely financed by the participating members, it won't impact other members of the co-op.

"This project was one hundred percent funded by the members that are purchasing the output of those panels," said Pierson. "This project allows these members to see a local, physical solar asset in their community that is working for them and is credited on their bill each. So really



The solar trailer has been featured at several co-op public outreach events.

our focus with renewable is really about member choice."

The landscape of renewable energy is vast and ever-changing and every co-op is planning their own approach, but with resources like the solar trailer, tools for education and engagement are within reach for members wanting to learn more.



The interior of the solar trailer is equipped with battery storage and outlets – powering everyday electrical appliances, such as a hairdryer.



A total of 222 guests attended Lake Region Electric's 82nd Annual Meeting

2023 Annual Meeting

The Lake Region electric Association 82nd Annual Membership Meeting was held in Britton on June 8th. The meeting was held at the Britton Event Center. There were 157 active members registered, along with 65 guests. We hosted a total of 222 people! Some special guests were among the attendees, including one former employee and several past board members.

This year, the board of directors decided to give attending members meal vouchers to local restaurants, rather than serve a hot meal. The meal voucher program is something that was done for a couple of years due to the COVID 19 pandemic and it was a great success. While it is nice to get together to share a meal and visit, caterers in rural areas can be challenging to coordinate, numbers can be difficult to estimate, and waste can be a problem. The meal voucher program promotes many of our local restaurants and gives members of Lake Region a few more options. Members had to be present at the meeting to get a voucher. Those in attendance snacked on delicious popcorn from the Strand Theater, chips, and cookies. They also were treated to an ice cream bar on their way out, which on a hot June day was a huge hit!

LREA Board Secretary, Tom Steiner, declared that there were enough registered members, verifying 157, in attendance to constitute a quorum.

The meeting was then officially called



Members enjoyed visiting as they registered for the meeting.

to order by President Pearson. Kate Wismer of Britton awed the crowd with a beautiful acapella performance of our National Anthem. Dr. Terrill Sorenson, pastor of Britton Lutheran Parish, began the invocation by asking if anyone in attendance remembered what it was like before the REA came to their farm. Several people raised their hands, then he recognized what a blessing it is that we now have power provided by Lake Region and how much easier life is. He then shared a prayer, blessing the meeting and all in attendance.

Lindsey Kimber, Executive Director of Glacial Lakes Area Development (GLAD) welcomed the members. GLAD is a

community based non-profit economic development resource serving Marshall County South Dakota. The organization's purpose is to lead and coordinate economic and community development that will help local businesses prosper and enhance the quality of life for residents. Kimber is appreciative of the support from Lake Region to the communities of Marshall, Day, and Roberts counties as well as GLAD. Kimber then invited attendees to several upcoming area events.

Lake Region Electric's Board President, Kermit Pearson welcomed all of the guests in attendance. He recognized several special guests including Chris Studer of East River Electric, and Tom Jones. Jones is a current

LREA member, former board member, and our current USDA lender RUS.

Secretary Steiner then provided proof of mailing of the June 2023 Cooperative Connections magazine, which contained the official meeting notice as well as the minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting. A copy of proof of mailing is on file at the Lake Region office. Additional copies of the June issue were distributed in the guest bags that were handed out at registration. There were no changes or additions to the minutes as printed. There was a motion and a second to dispense of the reading of those minutes; motion passed.

President Pearson again stepped up to the podium to give the President's Report. Pearson stated that Eide Bailley performed Lake Region's audit, and no deficiencies were noted. Pearson then reviewed last year's finances and explained that Lake Region was able to return over \$832,000.00 in Capital Credit patronage in 2023. He explained the ten-year total patronage, as well as a breakdown of patronage from East River and Basin over the past 5 years.

Pearson expressed the importance of reliability when he addressed the crowd gathered at the meeting. East River Electric has been making huge investments in our territory over the past few years in order to improve and maintain reliability for our members. They have done this by upgrading and adding infrastructure as well as advancing technology. Since 2013 East River has invested over \$32 million in LREA territory and plans to invest another \$8 million over the next three years! These investments by East River will help Lake Region continue to provide our members with the increasing demand for reliable electricity.

Pearson then went on to talk about Basin Electric, which is one of the largest generation facilities in the nation. Lake Region members saw a credit on their March bill that they received in April that reflected a credit pass through from Basin due to excess energy sales in the market and greater than normal performance by basin's subsidiary Dakota Gasification. Pearson continued the theme of reliability when talking about Basin Electric and their all-of-the-above generation strategy. We are entering a time when we are demanding more electricity but restricting the way we generate that power to the point where some areas of the country are experiencing blackouts. Basin currently has a max generation capacity of more than two and a half times what they did in the year 2000. Pearson showed several slides to explain how Basin generates the power that we rely on. He shared that Basin created a Sustainability Report expressing that "We will focus on the affordability and reliability that our members expect. We will not set a goal that is outside of what technology can currently accomplish and our members can afford." He urged everyone to contact their representatives to express how the current direction of legislation and regulations are going to make having reliable power nearly unattainable and unaffordable for our members.

Pearson expressed a heartfelt thank you to his fellow directors, the staff and employees of Lake Region Electric for their dedication



Board President Pearson expressed the importance of reliability in today's utility market.

and work to keep your cooperative running smoothly.

Two Director Seats were up for election. Attorney Dan Smeins explained the Bylaws for the election process. He called for nominations from the floor. There were no nominations from the floor and motions were made and approved to re-elect incumbent Mark Wismer for District 2 and Tom Steiner for District 4.

Tim McIntyre took the stage to deliver the Manager's Report. He thanked everyone for coming, with a special thanks to the City of Britton for welcoming Lake Region Electric's annual meeting to their community. McIntyre proudly introduced his parents who came, by special invitation, all the way from Hettinger! He expressed gratitude to the members and reiterated Lake Region's commitment to community. McIntyre recognized LREA employees for their hard work to put together the annual meeting and their dedication all year long, in all sorts of weather and circumstance. McIntyre focused on the value of cooperative membership, how members benefit through patronage, bill credits, and on keeping power affordable. He mentioned that we are in a good place financially and have been able to maintain without a rate increase for quite some time, however the potential is there due to uncontrollable increases.

McIntyre explained to members that we have made a commitment to safety, and we are continually working to make sure our employees have everything they need to work in a safe environment. He also reminded members about the REC program, and ways to stay in-touch with what is going on at Lake Region by visiting our Facebook, website and using SmartHub.

Scholarship awards were presented to Matthew Mork of Pierpont and Ashton Mills of Britton.

Wrapping up the evening was a prize drawing with an assortment of prizes being given away, including one lucky winner of \$500 cash!



FLIPPING THE SWITCH

Third generation ranchers Ken and Kathleen Meier stand by one of the first electric utility pole installed on their ranch.

The Meier Family and Illuminating Rural South Dakota

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

In the rural heartland of Firesteel, S.D., a transformational moment still echoes in the minds of third-generation ranchers Ken and Kathleen Meier. Over a span of 56 years on their farmstead, they have run cattle, reared horses, and even raised two children. After all

of those years, however, they still vividly remember the moment when electricity illuminated their rural community for the first time in the early 50s.

It's safe to say, their memories go back a long way. And yet, their bond with their home extends even further, reaching back a century to when their families were still

establishing roots in the frontier of the rural prairie.

Ken recalls the unlikely story which brought his grandpa, Anton Meier, from Iowa to the captivating, rolling landscape near Timber Lake, S.D., in 1923.

"Well, my grandpa was ornery when he had a bit too much to drink," said Ken. "Anyway, after a night of drinking, they threw him out of a bar in Iowa, so he crawled into a train car for a nap. When he woke up, he was in South Dakota."

According to Meier, his grandpa Anton quickly fell in love with the state and decided to relocate his

family to a new frontier near Timber Lake. In a coincidental twist of fate, Kathleen's family also settled in the same area around the same time. Unlike Anton's serendipitous journey,

Kathleen's grandfather, Frank Holzer, had a more traditional approach.

"My grandpa didn't get a free ride," laughed Kathleen. "He came down with our family from North Dakota with a horse and a milk cow tied to the back of the family's covered wagon."

When their families first settled the area, it was the era of kerosene lamps, horses and hard work. Yet in their childhood, both Ken and Kathleen witnessed the transition from kerosene lamps to electric light bulbs, a change that would propel their families and their communities forward.

"I must have been 9 or 10, but I remember when Moreau-Grand put our line up," Ken reminisced. "The memory of those first poles being driven into the ground by a couple of guys with an old International Truck has stuck with me. It was just something you don't forget."

Today, those original poles placed in the ground more than 70 years ago still stand tall on their ranch. Kathleen, too, recalls the transformative impact they had.

"I was about the same age when we first wired our house," said

Kathleen. "I remember how fun it was to just turn the lights on and have bright lights."

However, the electrification of their neighborhood brought more than just the novelty of flipping a switch. Kathleen's family promptly modernized their home. Their stove and fridge transitioned from kerosene to electric, and they even invested in a milking machine. The arrival of electricity didn't just bring about change; it revolutionized daily life on the ranch, making it cleaner and more efficient.

"Our old washing machine ran on a gas engine," said Kathleen. "You had to stomp on a pedal to get that motor started. It smoked up the entire house. Once we had electricity all we had to do was plug it in."

Progress didn't stop at the washing machine. "It didn't take long for things to change," added Ken. "I remember when I was about thirteen, my neighbor purchased the first television in the neighborhood, so everything happened fast. We would all go to watch whatever was on."

The transition has continued to benefit the Meier family. Today, their son, Kent Meier, works in the power industry with Border States Electric, a company that sells electrical equipment, tools and appliances. Their daughter, Cindy Lindskov has carried on the family tradition as a fourth-generation rancher in Isabelle, S.D., a town conveniently located just a stone's throw away from her parents.

It's amazing how much has changed over the years," said Ken. "Since the day we first got electricity, Moreau-Grand has done a great job of keeping our light on and burning bright."



One of the original utility poles on Ken and Kathleen Meier's land was created in 1950, yet it still functions to this day.

Lake Region Hosts Student Intern Dylan Grimes

Laura London

Lake Region Electric

Dylan Grimes is considering an education and career path similar to the one his dad, Jim, did about 28 years ago. Dylan chose to spend his Senior Experience at Lake Region Electric because he plans to attend Mitchell Technical College for powerline maintenance with the hopes of becoming a lineman in the future. Prior to starting his internship, Dylan felt as if he knew a lot about Lake Region because his dad has worked here since before Dylan was born, yet he was surprised by a few things he learned. Dylan said what surprised him the most was, “how everyone works together to get the jobs done, even the office people.”

Dylan is the second Webster graduate to intern at Lake Region for the 2022-2023 school year. According to Morgan Heuer, the Senior Experience coordinator & instructor, “The Senior Experience is a quarter long class designed as a capstone experience to help them graduate and become successful people beyond high school. During the first few weeks, the students learn more about themselves through career assessments and personality tests.” They then transition into what Heuer calls the “job process,” where they learn about and discuss applying for jobs, resumes, cover letters, and do a mock interview. Students then conduct a career research project. With some guidance from Heuer, students are responsible for contacting their employers in a field that they are hoping to pursue after high school. Where they are required to



Journeyman Lineman Mat Lynde showing Grimes equipment prior to leaving the shop.

“be in the field,” for roughly 20 hours.

Dylan said he enjoyed his time at Lake Region and enjoyed going out with the linemen because that is something he may want to do in the future. His favorite activity was going with Journeyman Lineman Bryce Jorgenson, and getting a feel for what he does.

Dylan said that his Senior Experience at Lake Region helped him understand how cooperatives run and that, he “believes all parts where fun, but I am not a fan of computers so anything to do with computers was my least favorite.” Most importantly, Dylan said, “I learned a lot about linemen and that will help me in the future.”

Dylan is the son of Jim and Laurie Grimes, he was born and raised in Webster and his hobbies reflect that. Like most of the linemen here, Dylan enjoys fishing, snowmobiling, and hanging out with friends and family at the lake all summer.



Grimes enjoyed the hands-on learning experience.

Director Elections

Two Director seats were up for election at the LREA Annual Meeting. Incumbents Mark Wismer and Tom Steiner ran unopposed and were re-elected.

Mark Wismer proudly submitted his petition and was re-elected to represent District 2. "I think electric cooperatives are a vital part of our rural economic infrastructure."

Tom Steiner was re-elected to represent District 4. "It's been a privilege to serve on the Lake Region board. One of the good things about serving on a co-op board is that you cannot be a board member unless you are a consumer so every decision we make affects us as equally as it affects every other consumer."

Effective governance and oversight of your cooperative is what keeps Lake Region Electric viable, providing reliable electricity and keeping rates affordable for the members. Serving on the Board of Directors is a commitment that requires representatives to attend local meetings on a monthly basis as well as state and national meetings. Board members attend trainings and pursue educational opportunities so that they are well informed on regulations and industry trends in order to best serve the members of Lake Region Electric Association. Members of Lake Region Electric are encouraged to get involved in their cooperative.



DIRECTOR ELECTION 2023



Mark Wismer
District 2

WISMER AND STEINER RE-ELECTED TO LAKE REGION ELECTRIC BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Tom Steiner
District 4

REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number: _____

Your E-mail Address: _____



July 14-16
Badlands Astronomy Festival
25216 Ben Reifel Road
Interior, SD
605-433-5243

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.

JUNE 23-25
46th Annual Main Street Arts & Crafts Festival
Centennial Park
Hot Springs, SD

JULY 1
Hill City's Annual Star-Spangled Celebration
8 a.m.
Hill City, SD
605-574-2368

JULY 4
Philip VFD Firework Display
Lake Waggoner
Philip, SD

JULY 7-8
Buffalo Gap Blow Out Rodeo
6 p.m.
Buffalo Gap, SD
605-890-1533

JULY 8-9
Brookings Summer Arts Festival
Brookings, SD
605-692-2787

JULY 12
Tracy Area Gardens & Quilts Tour
2 p.m.
Tracy, MN

JULY 13-16
Pioneer Days
White, SD
605-690-4458

JULY 14-16
Burke Stampede PRCA Rodeo
Burke, SD
605-830-2083

JULY 15
Huron MS Walk/Run
8 a.m.
Lake Byron
Huron, SD
605-350-5922

JULY 15-16
Charles Mix Saddle Club SDRA Rodeo
Geddes, SD
605-680-2763

JULY 21-23
Winner Elks 54th Annual Rodeo
Winner, SD

JULY 28-29
Farley Fest
Lake Farley Park
Milbank, SD
www.farleyfest.com

JULY 29
BBQ Pit Row and Car Show
Winner, SD
605-842-1533

JULY 30
Bergen Threshing Bee
9 a.m.
Bristol, SD
605-237-0310

AUG 13-14
Twin Brooks Threshing Show
Featuring Allis Chalmers
Twin Brooks, SD
605-880-2884

AUG 21
30th Annual Bishop's Cup Golf Tournament
Minnehaha Country Club and
The Country Club of Sioux Falls
Sioux Falls, SD
605-988-3765

SEPT 4
Hidewood Valley Stream Threshing Show
Steam Whistle Blows
1 p.m.
47236 183rd St
Clear Lake, SD

SEPT 29-30
Junkin' Market Days
Ramkota Exhibit Hall
Sioux Falls, SD
605-941-4958

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