



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



**Skiing for fun
and health**

**Nordic skiers find
paradise on the snow**
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**Car dealers adapt to
EV market**
Pages 12-13

Cross country skiing is a way to keep moving and maintain physical and mental health during the winter months.

2021 Wrap-Up and 2022 Rate Forecast



Jordan Lamb
jlamb@
oaheelectric.com

Your cooperative has been working extensively this past year to add new members and improve facilities across our footprint. I thank and commend our team for looking out for our membership and finding fixed solutions to individual member problems rather than blanket approaching our unique and growing membership.

When evaluating rates across our footprint, it is crucial we maintain independence within each rate class and avoid cross-subsidization between classes. As many of our members recognize, costs of goods, living and general inflation have sky-rocketed the past year. Surprising to many but not to us, Oahe Electric Cooperative's rates remain stable year over year.

Inflation has driven up our fixed cost for installing and maintaining all services throughout our area. Though we project increases in some rate classes, we still anticipate Oahe Electric rates to be outpaced by inflation, meaning rates over time will continue to hold or drop compared to the value of the U.S. Dollar.

This upcoming 2022 year marks the first time since 2019 we have modified rates to our members. While this does not affect every rate class, it does lay bricks for a promising future for our cooperative. Inflation has driven up our fixed cost for installing and maintaining all services throughout our area. Though we project increases in some rate classes, we still anticipate Oahe Electric increases to be outpaced by inflation, meaning rates over time will continue to hold or drop compared to the value of the U.S. Dollar. We break these down by the size, type, age and functionality at each meter throughout our footprint. In order to keep rates stable, it is imperative each meter delivery 'breaks even' over 30 and 40 year amortization schedules regardless of kWh energy sold or not sold to each delivery point.

Effective Jan. 1, 2022, we will be modifying fixed charges and energy rates to members in rate classes that do not cover Oahe members' cost of equipment or lose on energy pricing. We value you as a customer and place a strong emphasis on providing you with exceptional service. To maintain the quality, reliability and integrity of the services we provide, it is necessary for us to adjust specific pricing structures (please see rate chart on next page).

These rate changes include increasing heating/air conditioning rate from 5c/ kWh up to 5.5c/ kWh to compensate sub meter equipment installation costs (members without a sub-meter in the residential class should not pay install costs for members that require a sub-meter). While our heat/AC rate is increasing slightly, it is important to note that at 6.2c/ kWh, roughly 0.7c/kWh higher than proposed, electricity is still less than half the price of natural gas per 100,000 btu. We anticipate over time that this will continue to be stable, if not drop, and that any changes to this rate class will strictly cover the cost of the sub-meter installations required to provide a cheaper heat and air conditioning rate to our membership. Residential and small power fixed charges have increased from \$40/month up to \$42/month for single phase and from \$80 to \$84/month three phase. Small and Large Power rates will eventually merge to provide comparable rates and options to all commercial and agricultural businesses across our footprint.

We are committed to providing you with reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible electric service. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the implementation of this rate adjustment, we encourage you to call our offices at 1-800-640-6243. We will do our best to answer your questions and we look forward to working with you on ways that you may be able to reduce your monthly bill. One strategy may be to implement energy efficiency programs into your home or to calculate your energy use and to budget your energy use. Have a merry Christmas and a happy New Year from Oahe Electric!



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS OAHE ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 019-042)

Board of Directors:

James Feller – Vice President
605.962.6207
Brandon Haag – Assistant Secretary
605.215.6758
Ryan Noyes – Treasurer
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Kirk Yackley – President
605.258.2412

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Tyler Arbach – Journeyman Lineman
Mark Bruning – Line Foreman
Matt Eldridge – Operations Manager
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Brady Gaer – Journeyman Lineman
Sidney Geigle – Journeyman Lineman
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Tory Smith – Journeyman Lineman

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Cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better rural living. Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Blunt, SD 57522 and at additional mailing offices.

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Our Mission

Oahe Electric delivers high quality, low-cost electric service to our local member-owners. As a Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, we are committed to meeting the highest standards of customer satisfaction. We do business with accountability, integrity, innovation and commitment to community. As an electric co-op, we are part of America's most trusted network of high quality energy providers.

Rate Chart

FARM AND RESIDENTIAL RATE

	Present Rates	New Rates
Facility Charge	\$40 per month	\$42 per month
Energy Charge	\$0.090 per kWh	No increase
Electric heat and air conditioning	\$0.050 per kWh	\$0.055 per kWh

SMALL POWER RATE

	Present Rates	New Rates
Billing Demand - Over 20KW	\$10 per month	No Longer Available
NEW - Billing Demand - Over 10KW	--	\$10 per month
Facility Charge - single phase	\$40 per month	\$42 per month
Facility Charge - three phase	\$80 per month	\$84 per month
Energy Charge	\$0.080 per kWh	\$0.075 per kWh

LARGE POWER RATE

	Present Rates	New Rates
Demand Charge	\$10/KW/month	\$10/KW/month
Energy Charge		
First 150 kWh per KW of billing demand	\$0.070	\$0.075
Excess kWh	\$0.055	No increase

DUSK TO DAWN AND STREET LIGHTING

	Present Rates	New Rates
175MV/100HPS - Unmetered	\$12 per month	No increase
175MV/100HPS - Metered	\$8 per month	No increase
400MV/250HPS - Unmetered	\$15 per month	No increase
400MV/250HPS - Metered	\$10 per month	No increase

IRRIGATION

	Present Rates	New Rates
Monthly Minimums	\$1.50 per HP	No increase
Off Peak	\$5.75 per KW	No increase
On Peak	\$20 per KW	No increase
Energy Charge		
First 150 kWh per KW of billing demand	\$0.070	No increase
Excess kWh	\$0.055	No increase

RANGE WELLS

	Present Rates	New Rates
Facility Charge	\$40 per month	\$42 per month
Energy Charge	\$0.090 per kWh	No increase

IDLE SERVICES

	Present Rates	New Rates
Idle Service Fee	\$20 per month	\$42 per month

(Rates do not include any applicable taxes)

MEMBER THANK YOU

Dear Oahe Electric Friends,

Many thanks for your continuing support of our Courthouse Dome Restoration Project. We appreciate it! – Lew Robbenolt, Treasurer, Sully County Historical Society

Thank you for the nice prizes for winning the November question of the month. I have already used the insulated bag and love the recipe books. I can always use a outlet strip. Hoping the snow stays away so I won't need to use the snow brush/ scraper, but thank you. – Jane Naylor

Crunch the numbers on New Year's savings in your home

If your New Year's resolution to spend less and save more always fizzles out by March, don't fret. With a few simple adjustments in your house, you can save money on your energy bill each month. Here's how:

- Save up to 20 percent on heating by installing a programmable thermostat and setting it to automatically lower the heat when you leave the house for more than five hours and when the family goes to bed for the night.
- Save 1–3 percent on heating costs for each degree you turn the thermostat down. For optimal savings, set the thermostat at 68 degrees while at home and 65 degrees at night and before you leave the house for an extended period.
- Save up to 20 percent on heating and cooling bills by sealing air leaks around doors and windows with caulk and weatherstripping. This inexpensive energy saver will pay for itself within a year.
- Save at least 25 percent on air conditioning when you replace your old, inefficient central AC with one that has a seasonal energy-efficiency ratio of 14 or higher.
- Save up to 40 percent on what you spend to run your refrigerator by replacing an old unit with a new Energy Star-certified model.
- Save more than 50 percent on energy for cooking when you use a microwave oven instead of a conventional oven to heat meals.
- Save more than 10 percent on your water heating bill by lowering the water heater temperature from 140 degrees to 120.
- Save 75 percent or more on energy for lighting by replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs. They also last about 25 times longer. Switching out CFLs for LEDs will reduce lighting costs as much as 50 percent.
- Consistently turning off lights when not in use or when natural light is sufficient can reduce lighting expenses 10–40 percent.
- Enable the power management function on computers and sleep setting on appliances.

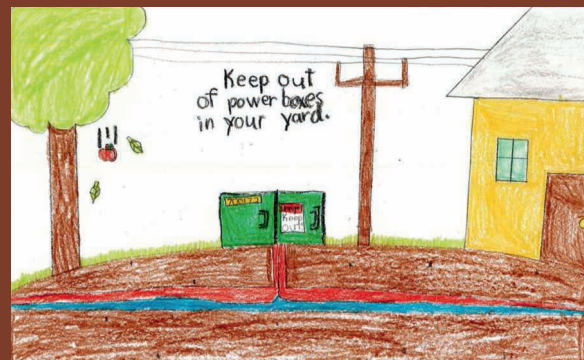
CO-OPS IN ACTION



South Dakota's electric cooperatives deliver affordable, reliable power to our members in every corner of the state. But we do so much more!

Visit our Co-op Connections Plus YouTube channel and you'll see co-ops in action at local community events, youth leadership programs and charitable fundraising events like the annual Line Patrol Charity Ride. We've got South Dakota covered!

Simply scan the QR code to the right and be sure to subscribe!



Keep out of power boxes

Trinity Kurtenbach

Trinity knows that those green “power boxes” that are often seen near homes or along roadways contain electrical equipment that can pose a hazard. Trinity is the child of Cory Kurtenbach and Tonya Buchholz-Froehlich of Nunda and attends Sioux Valley Elementary in Volga. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy.

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.

SOUPS FOR THE SOUL

SMASHED POTATO SOUP

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped carrot
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped celery
- 1 pkg 14 oz refrigerated mashed potatoes
- 1 14.5 oz can chicken broth
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 garlic clove pressed
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp pepper
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 2 Tbsp fresh parsley

METHOD

Place mashed potatoes in medium saucepan. Gradually add broth and milk, whisking until mixture is smooth. Stir in carrot, celery, garlic and salt and pepper. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, 10 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in sour cream and parsley. Top with desired toppings. 4 servings; 5 cups. Optional toppings: sliced green onion, shredded cheddar cheese, cooked, crumbled bacon.

Becki Hausser, Tripp

CREAMY CHICKEN GNOCCHI SOUP

Ingredients:

- 6 Tbsp butter
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 cups onion
- 1 cup diced celery
- 4 garlic cloves (minced)
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 cups half and half
- 1 (32 oz) container chicken broth (add more for a thinner soup)
- 1 Tbsp thyme
- 2 cups carrots
- 2 cups spinach or kale
- 3 cups diced, cooked chicken
- 2 (16 oz) packages potato gnocchi
- Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Add butter and olive oil to large pot over medium heat. Sauté onions, celery, and garlic until tender. Add flour to create a roux and stir for one minute. Slowly add the half and half and chicken broth. Stir until it thickens. Add the thyme, carrots, spinach, chicken and gnocchi. Cook for 5-10 minutes until gnocchi is cooked and soup thickened. If soup gets too thick just add more chicken broth. Salt and pepper to taste.

Tracey Burkett, Olivet

CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

Ingredients:

- 1-1.5 lbs chicken thighs bone in or boneless (skinless)
- 3 bay leaves
- 5 peppercorns, whole
- 1 small whole onion peeled, hairy end intact
- 3 large garlic cloves
- 12 cups chicken stock low sodium
- 2 large carrots diced
- 2 cups potatoes diced
- 1 1/2 cups egg noodles or any short pasta
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 3 tsp fresh dill, parsley or green onion finely chopped

METHOD

In a large Dutch oven or pot, add chicken thighs, bay leaves, peppercorns, onion, 2 garlic cloves and stock. On high heat, bring soup to a boil covered then move lid to the side a bit to keep soup clear. Cook for 20 minutes, removing foam as it rises to the top with a mesh strainer. Dice potatoes and carrots. Chop dill and grate garlic. Add potatoes and carrots, stir and reduce heat to medium. Cook with half lid open for 5 minutes. Add pasta, stir and cook for another 5 minutes. Discard onion, bay leaves and peppercorns with mesh strainer. Add salt, olive oil, grated garlic clove, dill and ground black pepper to taste. You can also shred chicken right in the pot. Let sit covered for 5 minutes.

ifoodreal.com

Please send your favorite soup 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 2022. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

RED PHISH, BLUE PHISH



Valerie Marso
vmarso@
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We get multiple phone calls per week from consumers needing to update their autopay information due to their card getting hacked.

There is an unfathomable amount of information being exchanged every second online and

as you probably have seen on the news, scammers want your information for their personal gain.

Almost everyone has an email address these days, can type faster than they can write and what used to take weeks or days can be transmitted worldwide within seconds. The world as it used to be is no more. And with these changes in communication brings new challenges. Hackers, scammers, ransomware threats, phishing, malware – they all resemble something from a Dr. Seuss book, but the dangers are very real.

So, what does Oahe Electric do to keep your information safe as well as our own? We have a dedicated team of IT experts at East River Electric (where we purchase our electricity from) who work tirelessly to monitor our network, analyze and prevent threats among many, many other things.

Prior to having this option, we did our best to keep up with the ever-changing technology world, but since that is far from anyone at Oahe's area of expertise, we decided it was best to leave it to the knowledgeable professionals and enlisted in an entire team to take on those tasks and everything that comes with it. We have a formal cybersecurity plan, follow the industries best practices, participate in continual training and are proactive when it comes to security.

Our billing and accounting software comes with its own security practices as well. Security permissions must be granted to see certain information which is based on duties as well as a need-to-know basis. Not just anyone can see sensitive information.

What can you do to help keep your personal information safe? Create a STRONG password, don't use the same password for multiple accounts, use caution when clicking on links or attachments, shop on trusted websites and keep your antivirus up to date. Check out the table to see how easily passwords can be hacked. Pretty scary!

Oahe Electric is being

very diligent and proactive in keeping your information as well as ours safe. It requires a lot of time and effort from many people amongst many agencies. We are fortunate to have such great resources to ensure the safety and reliability of our grid and consumer information.

Oahe Electric will never give out your personal information or sell it to anyone. In fact, much to some people's dismay, we don't even give out usage history without a release from the account owner! If you ever have any questions about our security practices or anything else regarding your account, please don't hesitate to contact us!

TIME IT TAKES A HACKER TO BRUTE FORCE YOUR PASSWORD

Number of Characters	Numbers Only	Lowercase Letters	Upper and Lowercase Letters	Numbers, Upper and Lowercase Letters	Numbers, Upper and Lowercase Letters, Symbols
4	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly
5	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly
6	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	1 sec	5 secs
7	Instantly	Instantly	25 secs	1 min	6 mins
8	Instantly	5 secs	22 mins	1 hour	8 hours
9	Instantly	2 mins	19 hours	3 days	3 weeks
10	Instantly	58 mins	1 month	7 months	5 years
11	2 secs	1 day	5 years	41 years	400 years
12	25 secs	3 weeks	300 years	2k years	34k years
13	4 mins	1 year	16k years	100k years	2m years
14	41 mins	51 years	800k years	9m years	200m years
15	6 hours	1k years	43m years	600m years	15 bn years
16	2 days	34k years	2bn years	37bn years	1tn years
17	4 weeks	800k years	100bn years	2tn years	93tn years
18	9 months	23m years	6tn years	100 tn years	7qd years

-Data sourced from HowSecureIsMyPassword.net

Oahe Electric Now Accepting Lineman's Scholarship Applications

Oahe Electric Cooperative is offering a **\$1,000** scholarship for a full-time student registered or planning to register in a power line construction and maintenance program.

The purpose of this scholarship is to emphasize and support the education of future power line workers in South Dakota. Oahe Electric has committed to providing funds for financial assistance to students enrolled in power line maintenance programs with the hopes that graduates of that program will pursue a career with rural electric cooperatives in the area. Applicants for the scholarship must be a member or a member dependent of Oahe Electric OR a student from the Hughes or Sully County areas. Applications for the 2022-2023 academic year are being accepted until **Feb. 11, 2022**.

For more information regarding these scholarships, contact Samantha at Oahe Electric in Blunt at 1-800-640-6243 or oahe@oaheelectric.com. Applications can also be downloaded by visiting our website at www.oaheelectric.com.

Oahe Electric Now Accepting Applications for 2022 Scholarships

Oahe Electric, in conjunction with Basin Electric Power Cooperative, is offering **one \$2,000** college scholarship to a lucky dependent of an Oahe Electric member(s). In addition to this scholarship, Oahe Electric is offering **four \$1,000** college scholarships. The scholarship program recognizes and encourages the academic achievements of students in our region. It also serves as an investment in the economic future of rural areas.

Applicants for the scholarships must be a U.S. citizen and a dependent of Oahe Electric members. Applicants also must be students enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. The scholarship recipients are chosen based on a combination of their written essay, SAT/ACT scores, overall grade-point average, work experience, participation in school and community activities, a personal statement of career goals and a written recommendation by a third party. Applicants for the 2022-2023 academic year are being accepted until **Feb. 11, 2022**.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

This month's question is: How much is the residential facility charge increasing in 2022?

Please submit your answer via email to oahe@oaheelectric.com with the subject line of "Question of the Month." A surprise gift will be sent to the winner!

WINNER OF QUESTION OF THE MONTH

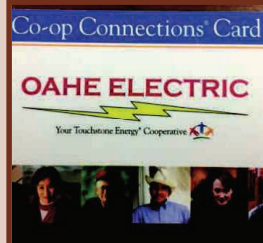
The Question of the Month winners for the December 2021 publication were Steve and Jane Naylor. They correctly answered the question "How long was the Pony Express in operation?" with the answer being only 18 months! Congratulations

Congratulations and we hope you enjoyed your prizes!

LIKE US!

You can now keep in touch with your cooperative on Facebook! We will share with you the latest news, events, power outage updates, energy efficiency tips, money-saving rebates, load management information, legislative alerts, safety tips and much more!

We hope you "like" Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. on Facebook!



Cooperative Connections Card Program Vendors

Automotive

Graham Tire Company	605-224-8643	Pierre	Receive a 10% discount on regularly priced service work. Cannot be combined with any other offer.
Lamb Motor Company	800-952-2222	Onida	Receive a free alignment check with the purchase of 4 new tires.
Napa Auto and Truck Parts/Farnam's Genuine Parts, Inc.	605-224-8624	Pierre	Receive 10-50% off retail price.

Food/Convenience Store

Branding Iron Bistro	605-494-3333	Pierre	Enjoy \$1 off your order. Limit one per visit.
Gator's Pizza Pasta and Subs	605-224-6262	Pierre	Purchase any large pizza at regular price and receive a FREE order of breadsticks.
Grey Goose Store	605-945-0794	Pierre	Receive a free 20 oz. fountain soda or coffee with the minimum of a \$30 gas or diesel purchase.
The Corner	605-258-2400	Onida	Buy one breakfast sandwich at regular price, get second half off.

Health/Fitness and Beauty

Anytime Fitness	605-224-4011	Pierre	Receive a free two-week mini-membership.
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Home/Garden

Slumberland Furniture	605-945-1997	Pierre	20% off any regular priced Lazy Boy items. Excluding special orders.
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Services

Apryl's Animal House	605-224-9203	Pierre	10% off a grooming or boarding
Inman's Water Technologies	605-224-5111	Pierre	Receive a 15% discount on the rental price of a water softener and/or reverse osmosis drinking water system by paying a year in advance. Receive 10% off of the purchase price of a new Water Softener or reverse osmosis drinking water system when you mention this ad. Payments made by credit cards do not qualify for discounts/specials.
Olson Plumbing Inc.	605-224-6436	Pierre	\$50 discount on any electric boiler, Marathon water heater, or fireplace
Small Engine House	605-224-5815	Pierre	10% off parts and labor

Sports/Recreation

Teton River Traders Gun Shop LLC	605-224-1371	Ft. Pierre	2% discount. Payments made by credit cards do not qualify for discount.
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Retail

Fastenal	605-224-4060	Pierre	10% off of fasteners and 5% off on all other products
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FUN AND FITNESS ON THE SNOW

An estimated 5.2 million Americans participate in cross country skiing while reaping the rewards of being active during the winter months.

Nordic Ski Club promotes the benefits of cross country skiing on mind, body and soul

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Many winter sports enthusiasts are firm in their belief that snow skis are meant to travel in one direction only – downhill.

But members of the Black Hills Nordic Ski Club use their skinny skis to take them wherever the trail may lead.

The club's winter playground is located at Big Hills XC Trails seven miles southwest of Spearfish where its

members have frolicked in the snow since the 1970s. Early prospectors named the area after they encountered steep grades in their pursuit of gold and fortune, but these days people flock to Big Hill for fitness and fun.

With more than 1,200 Facebook followers, the group invites not only cross country skiers to enjoy the 13.6 miles of trails but also skate skiers, fat bikers, snow shoers and even snow man makers.

Immediate past president Josh Wangeman explains there are an

estimated 5.2 million Nordic skiing enthusiasts throughout the country who seek both physical and mental health restoration along the trails.

After spending his day teaching science to his eighth graders at Spearfish Middle School, Wangeman likes to unwind in the woods.

"I've found that it's a good way to escape the crowds and participate in the wonders of nature," he said. "It's a great sport if you're looking to find some solace, enjoy the outdoors and get a good workout at the same time."

Wangeman, who also enjoys swimming and cross country running, fell into the sport after joining the National Guard six years ago. He began training for the biathlon, a competition where skiers travel from check point to check point with a .22 caliber rifle and shoot at targets. He has represented the Guard at competitions in Minnesota, Wyoming, Vermont and Utah.

Like many outdoor activities, cross country skiing has seen a significant surge in interest in the past year. One of the top attractions of the sport is that the cost of entry is relatively small. For instance, a quality mountain bike can cost thousands of dollars and other pastimes require a substantial financial investment for equipment, gear, fees and more.

"You can find some used gear and get everything you need for around \$100, or \$300 for new equipment," he said. "Trail access is free and you'll be outdoors getting some great exercise. As far as learning the technique, it's a straightforward process that's almost as simple as walking."

Wangeman said skiing across the snowy terrain can be a cinch compared to the work that's required to keep the trails maintained. Members of the Nordic Ski Club join forces with the Grooming Alliance of



Cross country skiers receive both the mental and physical health benefits of a sport that's economical to pursue.

Spearfish and log hundreds of hours of labor and donate hundreds of dollars each season to keep the pathways well-groomed for all to share. Some trails are designated for snow shoeing and fat biking only. Volunteers have also built a warming shelter in a meadow that's situated among the five loop trails where skiers can take a break from the wind and cold.

Aside from the Big Hills XC Trails, the Black Hills National Forest area has other sites suitable for cross country skiing. The Eagle Cliff Network is located 15 miles southwest of Lead and offers 20 miles of trails that cross open meadows and meander through Ponderosa pine forests. Half the trails are rated "difficult."

Bear Mountain is situated 10 miles

southwest of Hill City and features rocky ridges, abundant wildlife and scenic overlooks along its 16-mile trail system.

Additional pathways in the area can be found at Beaver Creek, Bear Butte State Park, Custer State Park and portions of the Centennial and Mickelson Trails.

Here are a few helpful tips for those who are thinking about taking to the wintry trails:

1. Start your day right with a hot beverage.
2. Pack well, and don't forget gloves, hat and extra socks. Layer, layer, layer.
3. Choose the right place to ski with good grooming and a reasonable and amount of flat terrain.
4. Consider taking lessons to

Cross country skiing sites

These state parks offer trails for cross-country skiers to enjoy:

- Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve
- Beaver Creek Nature Area
- Big Sioux Recreation Area
- George S. Mickelson Trail
- Hartford Beach State Park
- LaFramboise Island Nature Area
- Lake Herman State Park
- Lake Poinsett Recreation Area
- Newton Hills State Park
- Oakwood Lakes State Park
- Pelican Lake Recreation Area
- Richmond Lake Recreation Area
- Sica Hollow State Park
- Walker's Point Recreation Area



Volunteers keep the trails groomed for cross country skiing at Big Hill and also constructed a warming shelter, a popular site on cold and windy winter days.

improve your form.

5. Be prepared to fall. Acquiring balance takes time.

6. Keep your energy up with a ready snack such as a granola bar or an apple.

7. Have fun. Explore a bit and lose yourself in the rhythm of the sport.

8. Don't forget to look around you, and keep an eye out for wildlife or scenic vistas.

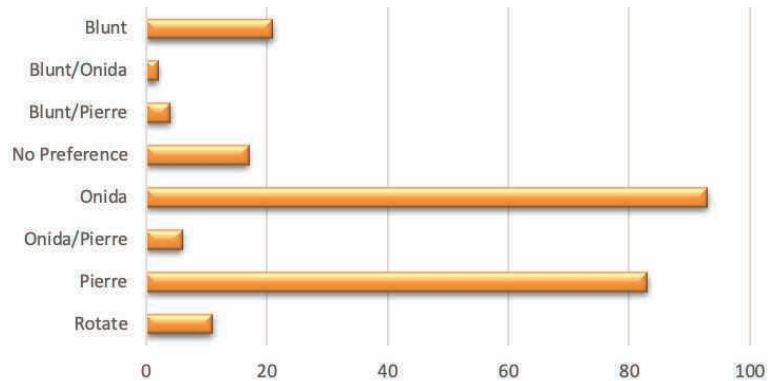
9. Reward yourself! You worked hard and did something adventurous.

ANNUAL MEETING SURVEY RESULTS

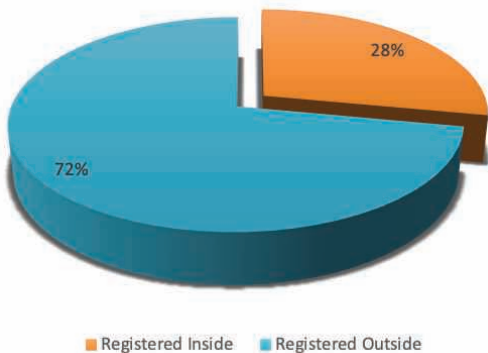
We would like to thank all our members who took the time to fill out and return our annual meeting survey this year! Feedback from our members helps us adapt our annual meeting to our members wants and needs.

We received a lot of great responses and wanted to share that with the rest of our membership!

LOCATION PREFERENCE

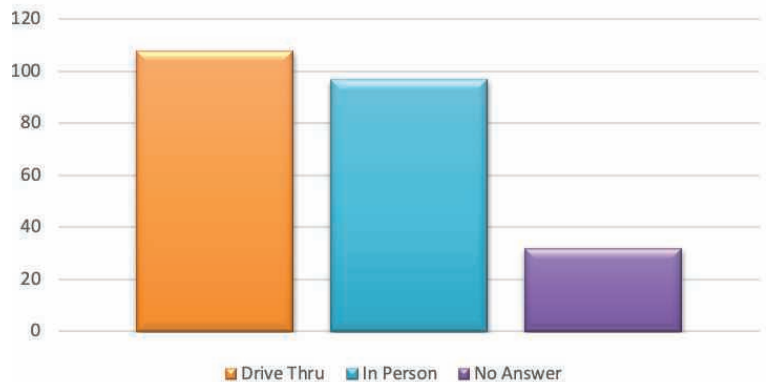


REGISTERED OUTSIDE VS. INSIDE



We also had quite a few comments in this area about possibly rotating the location of the meeting – definitely some food for thought!

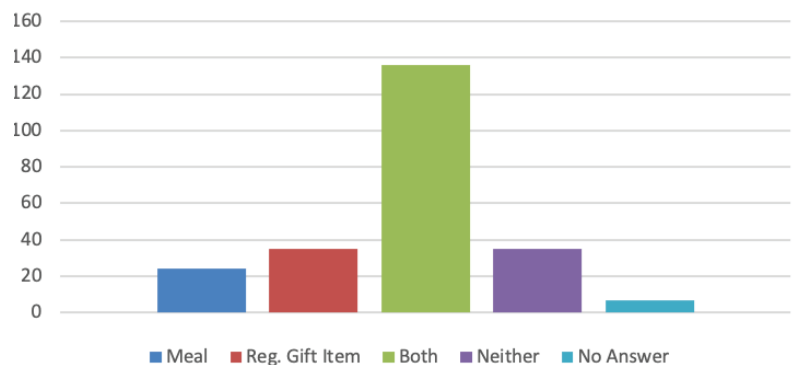
Attendance Style Preference



There were also a few suggestions regarding allowing mail in ballots or online voting for director elections. Unfortunately, that is not possible at this time. An excerpt from SD Codified Law 47-21-57 reads “Members may vote by mail for any issue authorized by the bylaws of the cooperative, except the election of directors, purposes prohibited by §47-21-20, or a vote required by §47-21-45.”

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding the annual meeting, please feel free to contact us at 1-800-640-6243.

WHAT WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO FORGO IN RETURN FOR A LARGER BILL CREDIT?



Learning From Failure, Part Two



Russ Hohn
rhohn@
oaheelectric.com

Courage is certainly required in our daily lives as many hurdles will stand in front of you during your time on earth. Yourself, your faith, your family and your friends will be the strength you need to stand up after each time you fall.

Thomas Edison once said that it was “ten thousand failures” that led to the final success of a working light bulb. Therein lies a lesson about failure: keep moving forward regardless of failure or number of failed attempts. Here are 10 more great lessons about failure from the mouths of successful people.

1. ACCEPT FAILURE, BUT KEEP TRYING.

Michael Jordan once said that, “I can accept failure, everyone fails at something. But I can’t accept not trying.” Failure then becomes a means to an end, rather than an end in and of itself. In other words, failure is a part of the journey toward success. Everyone fails at one time or another, the courage part comes in continuing to try.

2. CONTINUE FORWARD IN SPITE OF FAILURE.

Walt Disney was fired because he “lacked imagination and had no good ideas.” Here is the man responsible for an empire of imaginative movies and play for children the world over, and yet, he lost his job due to a lack of imagination. The lesson here is to keep moving toward that end goal, even when other people fail to see the same vision.

3. SUCCESS OR FAILURE IS DEPENDENT UPON WHETHER OR NOT YOU KEEP AT IT.

Babe Ruth said that, “Every strike brings me closer to the next home run.” This lesson is similar to Edison’s remark about his light bulb. Like it or not failure is the very engine of success, moving us one step closer to a successful conclusion. Of course, this also means that you have to keep going and not quit in attempting to achieve your goal.

4. SOMETIMES FAILURE SIMPLY MEANS CHANGING DIRECTION.

Love Ben & Jerry ice cream? So do I. Here were a couple of guys that had completely different directions for their lives and still managed to become admirably successful. Mr. Ben Cohen dropped out of college, while Mr. Jerry Greenfield failed to get into medical school, and both managed to become and remain wildly successful.

5. BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.

Not everyone is going to “get you.” Elvis Presley, Lucille Ball, and Carol Burnett were all told to pack it in and go home due to their “astounding” lack of talent. Yet, can you imagine a world without their music and humor? Success begins through believing in what you can do. Don’t let other people discourage you in your path toward success.

6. FAILURE IS A CHANCE TO LEARN.

Henry Ford is quoted as saying, “Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently.” Certainly, Edison would agree. You’ve just learned all the wrong ways toward that particular success, as Edison did with his “ten thousand” wrong attempts. Every lesson learned, every failure, is a movement in the right direction.

7. ATTITUDE ABOUT FAILURE CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

“Success is the ability to go from failure to failure without losing your enthusiasm,” said Sir Winston Churchill. England was at a great disadvantage with the advent of World War II. Here is a prime example of tiny David against mighty Goliath. Churchill’s enthusiastic belief in England’s defense was a part of the turning point for that country in the war.

8. COURAGE MUST BE YOUR WATCHWORD.

“If you have made mistakes, even serious ones, there is always another chance for you. What we call failure is not the falling down but the staying down,” a quote from Mary Pickford. We are all quite capable of spectacular mistakes and some of us, myself included, have made them. The key is to not allow defeat and failure to be the end-all. You must continue forward.

9. DON'T GIVE UP.

“For every failure, there’s an alternative course of action. You just have to find it. When you come to a road block, take a detour,” a quote from Mary Kay Ash. She was the founder of the very successful home business for leading cosmetics. Perhaps, the lesson of the failure is that there may be a better or a different way to achieve your goal.

10. SUCCESS CAN ONLY GROW FROM FAILURE.

Benjamin Disraeli, a former British Prime Minister said, “All my successes have been built on my failures.” Indeed, failure is only a tipping point when one is on the road to success. Without failure, we as humans don’t learn and our movement toward success is stagnated. Let failure guide you toward success instead of becoming the stopping point.

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CAR DEALERS ADAPT TO EV MARKET

Jesse Johnson of Jan Busse Ford in Highmore keeps customers informed of the latest industry news. *Photo by Billy Gibson.*

Car dealers adapt to emerging EV industry by making new investments and keeping their customers informed

Billy Gibson

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Keeping up with the emergence of the electric vehicle market is like listening to the hushed intonations of the announcer at the end of a 1960s-style soap opera.

Will a reliable charging network be constructed?

Will EVs become more affordable?

Will drivers ever overcome their range anxiety?

Will the political winds change direction?

Tune in tomorrow. Same time. Same channel.

Scott Shepherd is no fan of soap operas, but he's happy to give you his take on the topic. Shepherd is a career educator who has taken the EV leap and last June invested in Ford's debut model: the Mustang Mach-E. Shepherd recently delivered a presentation

describing his experience and insights to a group of electric cooperative representatives.

Subtitled "The Good, the Kind of Bad, and the Ugly," the presentation was intended to be an unbiased, unvarnished and apolitical analysis of the investment he made last year. Though Shepherd admits to being somewhat of an EVangelist, audience members were eager to hear Shepherd's comments to help them convey useful, accurate information to their electric cooperative consumers back in their respective service areas.

On the positive side, Shepherd said the advanced technology and the instant torque of his Mach-E deliver an exciting driving experience, and he likes doing his part to reduce emissions. His dealer, Jesse Johnson at Jan Busse Ford (Pioneer Garage, Inc.) in Highmore, was knowledgeable and ready to answer all of his questions and concerns. He noted

that factoring in a federal tax credit of up to \$7,500, he was able to save nearly \$1,000 in his first 5,000 miles of travel in the Mach-E.

"There's no gas tank to fill at over \$3 per gallon and no oil to change," he said. "A trip to Sioux Falls cost me \$6 in electricity, compared to \$49 in gas for an ICE (internal combustion engine)."

250
Approximate number of EV charging stations throughout the Upper Midwest.

On the not-so-good side, Shepherd pointed to the high front-end purchase price, reduced range during the winter months, the lack of Level 2 chargers in homes and the fact that traditional vehicles sometimes block access to public charging stations. He said in the rush to build out a reliable system of charging stations throughout the region,

standardized practices have yet to be developed.

“There can be a lot of inconsistent pricing with public charging stations,” he said. “Some require a connection fee plus a per-minute fee as high as 50 cents per kilowatt hour. The networks and the number of phone apps that are out there can be confusing, and I’ve also run across some charging stations that were malfunctioning.”

He pointed out that electric cooperatives, municipal utilities and investor-owned utilities in South Dakota and Minnesota are working together to create a charging network for public use that will reduce range anxiety for EV drivers. Presently, there are nine Tesla supercharger stations and four non-Tesla chargers in South Dakota, as well as more than 250 throughout the region and dozens more for the use of guests at hotels, campgrounds and other private properties.

Electrify America Fast recently announced the company is planning to install a bank of supercharging stations in Wall sometime in January, and state officials are looking to continue to invest money into light-duty charging stations from the second round of the Volkswagen Electric Vehicle Charging Station Program.

Johnson, Shepherd’s sales agent, said these days he’s getting lots of questions from scores of potential buyers who are ponying up the \$100 refundable



Jesse Johnson is shown adjusting the drive mode in the Ford Mustang Mach-E.

Photo by Billy Gibson.

fee at www.ford.com to get placed on a waiting list for not only the Mach-E but also the new Ford F-150 Lightning, the company’s first electric-powered pick up. In fact, he has a personal spot on the Lightning list along with more than 160,000 others across the country. Tesla, GMC, Rivian and Chevrolet are also introducing their own pick ups.

“We’re getting calls from all kinds of people - retirees, commuting moms and dads, gear heads, collectors, technology buffs, environmentalists, farmers, you name it,” said Johnson, who has already sent two early adopting customers home with the Mustang Mach-E and has a third on his lot.

Johnson said car and truck dealers will have to redouble their efforts to provide service after the sale as the EV industry continues to emerge. He keeps his customers, including the many who are on the purchaser’s waiting list, apprised of any new developments

160,000
Number of reservations made for the new Ford Lightning F-150 at www.ford.com.

in the market. For example, when manufacturers began recommending that owners refrain from exceeding an 80 percent charge - unless going on an extended trip - to extend the car’s battery life, Johnson made sure his customers got the memo.

In preparing for the transportation future, car dealers are having to make significant investments in education for their sales force, training for technicians and new service and maintenance equipment to accommodate EVs.

“EVs are fun to drive with their immediate torque and safe-driving technology,” Johnson said. “These vehicles are an excellent option for those wanting to forget about the price of gas, reduce maintenance and emissions. We understand they may not fit everyone’s lifestyle, but we see a definite place for them in the future.”



Scott Shepherd is shown above talking with students at the Lake Area Technical College Automotive Technology Program about his experience as an EV owner.

Hot Beer
Lousy Food
Bad Service
Welcome

SHARING A PASSION FOR COMMUNITY THEATRE

Bev Raske (left) and Diane Drager (right) pretend to share a cold one on set. The two have co-directed several shows together.

Performers in South Dakota and Minnesota express their passion on the community theatre stage

Emily Costar

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When you think of theatre, what's the first image that comes to mind? Maybe it's Hamlet, dramatically pondering whether "to be or not to be" with skull in hand and a rapt audience before him. Perhaps you envision a chorus line under the bright lights of Broadway, all high kicks and jazz hands.

Or maybe you think of a packed community hall with the folks up on stage delivering heartfelt moments and big laughs. The cast and crew consists of neighbors, colleagues and family. They're up on that stage, not for widespread acclaim or fortune, but for the love of live performance. This is community theatre.

In Minnesota, the town of Renville is no stranger to the performing arts;

they have the Renville Friends of the Arts organization, founded in 2002 and currently led by self-described "theatre junkie" Bev Raske. She first graced the stage at Renville County West High School in ninth grade for a one-act play, and continues to perform over six decades later.

"We use the same stage I stepped on back then," Raske fondly recalled.

Friends of the Arts tries to do two plays a year, which are held at the high school. Their most recent production was *Clue* this past October. Raske said productions are a "cooperative venture," as they work with the school to coordinate facility use and support other events. Friends of the Arts can't always have the space to rehearse, but that isn't a deal breaker.

"We've done a lot of rehearsing in my basement," Raske said with a chuckle.

It's that can-do attitude that's helped Friends of the Arts successfully apply for grants, such as the one that enabled them to acquire their own sound system, and then new LED lighting for the stage in a joint venture with the school.

It's also the attitude which led Joel Bakker, local farmer and Renville-Sibley Cooperative member-owner, to get involved with Friends of the Arts as an actor. Bakker was quick to applaud Raske's commitment to live theatre, saying, "She's a master of doing plays – she's the one that got me started."

Most recently seen onstage in 2020's *Twisted Christmas Carol*, Bakker has been in 10 plays with Friends of the Arts. As he put it, "I guess I enjoy being goofy in front of people. For some reason I don't have a fear!"

Bakker enjoys being involved because the productions provide folks with good entertainment they can come and see right in their area without having to travel. He also appreciates how close-knit the cast members get during a show, calling them "a second family."



Friends of the Arts also does musicals! One of their most recent productions was *Polyester the Musical*, a disco-style musical comedy.



For a few nights every year, Hayes Hall gets packed to standing-room only. West Central Electric Cooperative provides the hall's electrical power and is an annual sponsor of the Hayes play.

And good news for those who are interested: Friends of the Arts is looking to expand that family.

“We don’t want to end up being a bunch of gray-haired ladies trying to keep things going,” Raske wryly noted. “We want new people with new ideas.”

And as the organization celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2022, it’s the perfect time for new folks to get involved.

Renville Friends of the Arts isn’t the only community theatre group with an impressive history, though. In South Dakota, there’s the Hayes Drama Club. Hayes itself is a small town of less than 100 people, but each year the community hall gets packed full of people from the surrounding areas, excited to see what the club has in store. And just this past November, the club put on its 68th annual Hayes play.

“We’re the longest continuously running drama club in South Dakota!” Jack Mortenson proclaimed. He recently played Brad St. Clair in this year’s Hayes play, *The One Who Got Away*.

The club’s success shows a distinct passion for community theatre in the area, with many of its actors and volunteers traveling from surrounding areas to be a part of it. Mortenson himself regularly drove over 30 miles to and from Hayes to be in this year’s show. Beyond the dedication of its participants,

there’s a lot of community history in the club as well.

“Three generations of my family have been in the Hayes Drama Club. It’s tradition at this point,” said Mortenson, who has been in three Hayes plays already and is looking forward to future involvement as well.

Auditions for the annual play are usually held a couple months ahead of time at the Hayes Hall. And the audition details, such as time and date, are generally spread through word of mouth. So, if you find yourself wanting to join in on the theatrical fun, it wouldn’t hurt to join the Hayes Community group on Facebook to help stay in the know.

Renville Friends of the Arts and the Hayes Drama Club are just two out of hundreds of community theatre groups scattered across Minnesota and South Dakota. Live theatre is more than just national

tours in big, urban cities. It’s also the folks in your town coming together to deliver a heartfelt production at the local school or community hall just down the road.

So the next time you find yourself in the mood to sit back and have a few laughs, maybe shed a few tears and be immersed in another world for a couple hours – consider checking in on your local theatre group to see what they’ve been up to. You just might be surprised by what your community has in store.



Joel Bakker (center) in a cast photo from his most recent production with Friends of the Arts, *Twisted Christmas Carol*.

Want to get involved and stay up-to-date with Renville Friends of the Arts? Go give their Facebook page a like and follow at: www.facebook.com/Friends-of-the-Arts-360087927337206

To keep up with the latest happenings in Hayes (including the Hayes Drama Club), go join the public Hayes Community group at: www.facebook.com/groups/144509355581709

**61st Annual Black Hills Stock Show and Rodeo
January 28-February 5, 2022**



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.

To view the publication's master event calendar, scan the QR code below:



Or visit <https://sdrea.coop/cooperative-connections-event-calendar> to view more upcoming events.

**DECEMBER 21-25
Fort Sisseton Drive Thru
Christmas Light Display**
11907 434th Avenue, Lake
City, SD, 605-448-5474

**DECEMBER 23-24
1880 Train Holiday Express**
222 Railroad Avenue, Hill City,
SD, 605-574-2222

**DECEMBER 26-31
Christmas Nights of Lights**
Storybook Island, Rapid City,
SD, 1-605-342-6357

**DECEMBER 26-31
Garden Glow**
McCrary Gardens, Brookings,
SD, 605-688-6707

**DECEMBER 31
New Year's Eve With The
Davis Sisters**
Performing Arts Center of
Rapid City, Rapid City, SD,
605-348-4676

**JANUARY 1
Winter Wonderland Nature
Hike**
Big Sioux Recreation Area,
Brandon, SD, 605-594-3824

**JANUARY 4-6
Dakota Farm Show**
USD DakotaDome, Vermillion,
SD, more info available at
dakotafarmshow.com

**JANUARY 7
Neal McCoy**
The Dakota Event Center,
Aberdeen, SD, 605-725-2641

**JANUARY 8
Eric Church**
Denny Sanford Premier Center,
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

**JANUARY 14-15
Deadwood Red Dirt Festival**
Deadwood Mountain Grand
Event Center, Deadwood, SD,
605-559-0386

**JANUARY 15
Burning Beetle**
10th Street, Custer, SD, find
out more at www.facebook.com/barkbeetleblues

**JANUARY 15-16
Dakota Territory Gun
Collectors Association
Gun Show**
Swiftel Center, Brookings, SD,
605-793-2347

**JANUARY 16
Sioux Falls Izaak Walton
League January Trap Shoot**
5000 N Oakview Place, Sioux
Falls, SD, 605-332-9527

**JANUARY 16
WWE Supershow**
Denny Sanford Premier Center,
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

**JANUARY 21-23
That Golden Girls Show**
Orpheum Theater Center,
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

**JANUARY 22
Reba McEntire**
Denny Sanford Premier Center,
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

**JANUARY 28-29
Deadwood Pro Snocross
Races**
Days of '76 Rodeo Grounds,
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

**JANUARY 28-29
27th Annual Dinner Theater**
Reliance Legion Hall, Reliance,
SD, call 605-730-0553 for
more info and tickets

**JANUARY 28-31
Lead Winterfest**
Various Locations, Lead, SD,
call 605-584-1100

**JANUARY 28-
FEBRUARY 6
Black Hills Stock Show &
Rodeo**
Central States Fairgrounds &
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center,
Rapid City, SD, 605-355-3861

**JANUARY 29-30
Dakota Territory Gun
Collectors Association
Gun Show**
National Field Archery Building,
Yankton, SD, 605-731-9154

**FEBRUARY 5
Lake Hendricks
Improvement Association
Ice Fishing Derby**
Hendricks, MN, contact Tim at
507-828-2113 for registration
and more information

**FEBRUARY 5
Lakota Games on Ice**
3200 Indian Village Road,
Mitchell, SD, 605-996-5473

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