



# Cooperative Connections

Ione Fejfar welcomes veterans to Operation Black Hills Cabin in Custer as a place of healing and restoration

**A Healing Place  
for Veterans**

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**Co-ops and the  
S.D. National  
Guard**

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# Giving Back to Our Community



**Rodney Haag**

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**Concern for community  
is the heart and soul  
of who we are. And no  
matter what the future  
brings, you can count  
on your electric co-op  
to care about you.**

Over the years, you've probably heard or read about Oahe Electric's concern for our community. This is one of the core principles that sets cooperatives apart from other types of utilities and businesses. We've always taken this mission and responsibility to heart. It's who we are as a co-op.

Over the past few months, like so many of you, we've risen to meet new challenges and strengthen the safety net for our community, particularly for those who are most vulnerable. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've made numerous adjustments to programs and operations to maintain business continuity while staying focused on the bigger mission of helping our consumer-members during this turbulent time.

Now, with the holidays fast approaching, these recent events have made me pause and think about the role we play in our community. While our purpose is to provide safe and reliable energy to you, the members we serve, we have a greater mission – to be a catalyst for good.

You're probably aware of our Operation Round-Up program, where we take donations from generous members like you who have "rounded up" the amount due on their electric bill to help charitable organizations with their special projects, as well as disaster relief for community members. We also participate in the Youth Tour program, where we take our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action.

We also have a strong commitment to safety – not just for our employees, but for our community as well. We visit schools to teach children of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We also hold several safety demonstrations for both children and adults, including at our annual meetings and Farm and Home Shows.

Oahe Electric invests in the economic development of the community through the Rural Electric Economic Development program known as REED. We've made our community room available for community meetings and events.

You'll also see our employees serving on local boards, coaching youth sports, and volunteering at charitable events. Because when you work at a co-op, you understand how important a strong community is – after all, without you, the co-op wouldn't exist.

We know that our core job is to keep the lights on; but our passion is our community. Because we live and work here too, and we want to make it a better place for all.

If there's anything we can do to help you – whether providing energy-saving advice to help lower your monthly bill or discuss payment plan options during these difficult times – please reach out to us at 1-800-640-6243.

Concern for community is the heart and soul of who we are. And no matter what the future brings, you can count on your electric co-op to care about you.

# Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 019-042)

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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.

# Onida Senior Scholar of Week

Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. is proud to announce its Touchstone Energy® Scholar of the Week. The recipient of this honor is Zachary Farries, a senior at Sully Buttes High School in Onida. The honor, bestowed by Dakota News Now, gave Farries bragging rights for the week of Oct. 11-17.

Zachary boasts a 3.97 grade-point average. He is active in FFA, football, baseball and is also an academic letter winner.

Zachary received \$250 from Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. to reward him for his academic achievements.

Another perk for being selected, Zachary is automatically in the running for a

\$1,000 scholarship, to be awarded at a special banquet later this spring honoring all of this year's scholars.

The Scholar of the Week is an ongoing joint effort between Touchstone Energy® co-ops, like Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., and Dakota News Now.

The program recognizes the achievements of high school seniors throughout the region. The honor is awarded to highly motivated seniors who excel in the classroom as well as in their community.



## Statement of nondiscrimination

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(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [intake@usda.gov](mailto:intake@usda.gov)  
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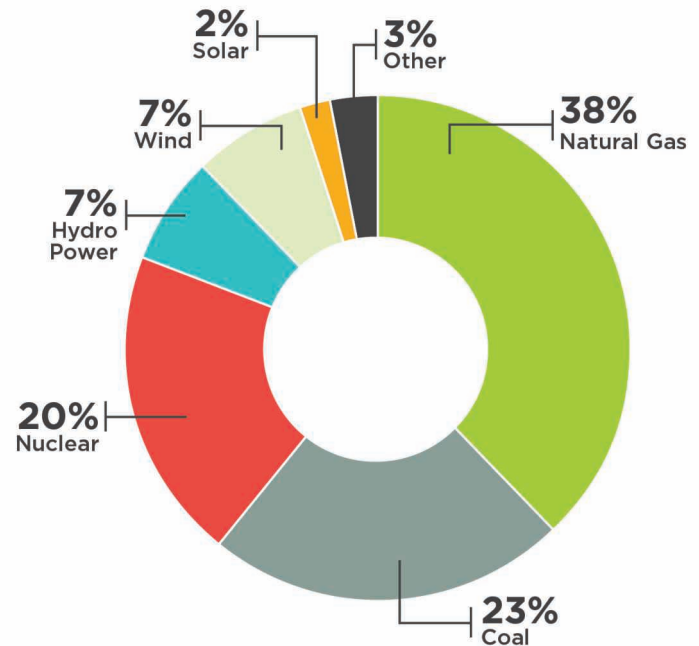
# Enjoy an energy-efficient feast this Thanksgiving

New electrical appliances use far less energy in your home than older ones, but that doesn't mean you should skimp on energy-efficient behavior in the kitchen.

During the frantic holiday season, making the simplest changes while cooking can save plenty of energy and money.

- There's usually no need to preheat the oven, especially if the food you're cooking - like a turkey or a ham - will be in it for a long time.
- Avoid opening the oven door to check on food. Instead, turn on the oven light and peer through the window to make sure your pumpkin pie or turkey isn't burning to a crisp. Opening the oven door - even for just a second or two - can drop the temperature inside the oven by 25 degrees.
- Place several items in the oven at once. All food will cook thoroughly if you leave enough room around pies or casseroles for air to flow.
- Electric ovens retain heat even after you turn them off, so it's safe to turn them off several minutes before a recipe's time is up. Electric stovetops work the same way: The metal element will keep cooking for several minutes after you turn it off.
- Choose glass or ceramic pans for the oven. They let you set the temperature 25 degrees lower than metal pans do.
- Match the pan size to the size of the stovetop burner so you don't waste heat. Just a 2-inch difference between pan and burner can waste 40 percent of the generated heat.
- Zap baked potatoes and vegetables in the microwave instead of simmering them on the stovetop. Microwaves use significantly less electricity than a stove or oven.
- Involve everyone in cooking. Leave the electric mixer in the cupboard and let the kids stir the cake batter by hand and recruit someone to chop the veggies instead of tossing them into a food processor. The experience might save some electricity and make everyone proud of contributing to the meal.

Keep these handy and helpful tips in mind as you prepare to entertain family and friends in your home this holiday season.



## Powerful Energy Sources

Nationally, electric co-ops and other utilities use a variety of fuels to power American homes and businesses. This diverse fuel mix supplies co-op members with the safe, reliable and affordable power they depend on.

## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



### "Keep Indoors!"

**Grace Austin, 7 years old**

Grace is a member of West River Electric Association based in Rapid City. She encourages readers, "During a storm, all kids and pets should be inside. So, don't go outside. It's dangerous."

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.



# Savory Slow-Cook Selections

## Slow-Cooker Zucchini Soup

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 ½ lbs. sweet Italian sausage            | 2 tsp. salt                              |
| 2 c. ½-inch celery pieces                 | 1 tsp. white sugar                       |
| 2 lbs. zucchini, cut into ½-inch slices   | 1 tsp. dried oregano                     |
| 2 (28 oz.) cans diced tomatoes (or fresh) | 1 tsp. Italian seasoning                 |
| 2 green peppers, cut into ½-inch slices   | 1 tsp. dried basil                       |
| 1 c. chopped onion                        | ¼ tsp. garlic powder                     |
|   | 6 T. grated Parmesan cheese, or to taste |

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook and stir sausage in the hot skillet until browned and crumbly, 5-7 minutes; drain and discard grease. Mix celery into cooked sausage; cook and stir until celery is softened, about 10 minutes. Combine sausage mixture, zucchini, tomatoes, bell peppers, onion, salt, sugar, oregano, Italian seasoning, basil and garlic powder in a slow cooker. Cook on low for 4-6 hours. Garnish each serving with 1 T. Parmesan cheese. Note: Water is not needed in this recipe.

**Shelly Goetz, Sioux Falls, SD**

## Crock Pot Corn

- |                                    |                           |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 (16 oz.) bags frozen corn        | 6 T. sugar                |
| 8 oz. cream cheese (but in chunks) | 6 T. water                |
|                                    | ½ cup butter or margarine |

Put in crockpot on high for two hours or low for four. Stir every once in a while. Salt and pepper to taste.

**Helen Gregory, Lemmon, SD**

## Spaghetti Corn

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 can cream style corn   | 1 onion, diced         |
| 1 can whole corn         | 1 cup shredded cheddar |
| 2 cups spaghetti, broken | 1 stick butter, melted |

Break spaghetti into 2-inch pieces. Do not drain whole corn. Combine all ingredients. Pour into buttered casserole dish. Bake uncovered for 30 mins. at 350. Cover and put back in oven for 20 mins. OR place in crock pot for 2 hours. OR Cook on stove for 40 mins. on lowest heat, removing for 10 minute intervals.

**Jane Ham, Rapid City, SD**

## BBQ Steakhouse Chili

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 2 T. oil   | beans, rinsed  |
| 1 lb. beef top round steak, cut into 1/2-inch pieces | 2-1/2 cups undrained canned no-salt-added diced tomatoes |
| 1 lb. extra-lean ground beef                         | 1 bottle (18 oz.) KRAFT Hickory Smoke Barbecue Sauce     |
| 1 onion, finely chopped                              | ¾ cup KRAFT Shredded Cheddar Cheese                      |
| ¼ cup A1 Dry Rub Bold Original                       |  |
| 3 cloves garlic, minced                              |  |
| 2 cans (16 oz. each) kidney                          |  |

Heat oil in large skillet on medium. Add next five ingredients; stir. Cook 10 min. or until meat is evenly browned, stirring frequently. Spoon into slow cooker sprayed with cooking spray. Add all remaining ingredients except cheese; stir. Cover with lid. Cook on low 7 to 8 hours (or on high 4 to 5 hours). Serve topped with cheese.

**Provided by Kraft Heinz**

## Chicken Cacciatore

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1/2 cup KRAFT Zesty Italian                               | 1 green pepper, cut in strips                  |
| 1 tsp. dried oregano leaves                               | 1/2 lb. sliced mushrooms                       |
| 2 lbs. mixed boneless skinless chicken breasts and thighs | 1-1/2 c. CLASSICO Tomato and Basil Pasta Sauce |
|   | 3 c. rotini pasta, uncooked                    |

Mix dressing/oregano in pot sprayed with cooking spray. Add chicken; coat both sides of each piece with dressing mixture. Top with vegetables and pasta sauce; cover with lid. Cook on low 6-8 hours (or high 4-6 hours). About 15 min. before serving, cook pasta, no salt. Drain. Serve topped with chicken and vegetables.

**Provided by Kraft Heinz**

Please send your favorite holiday 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 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

# Pumped Hydroelectric Storage

## Sometimes Called the Water Battery



**Russell Hohn**

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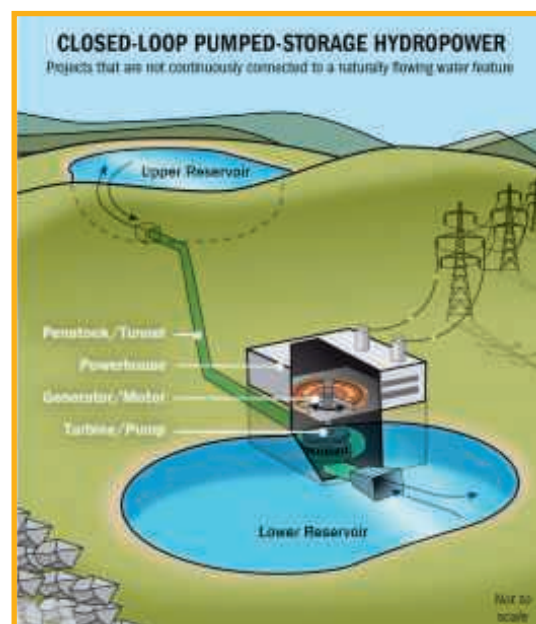
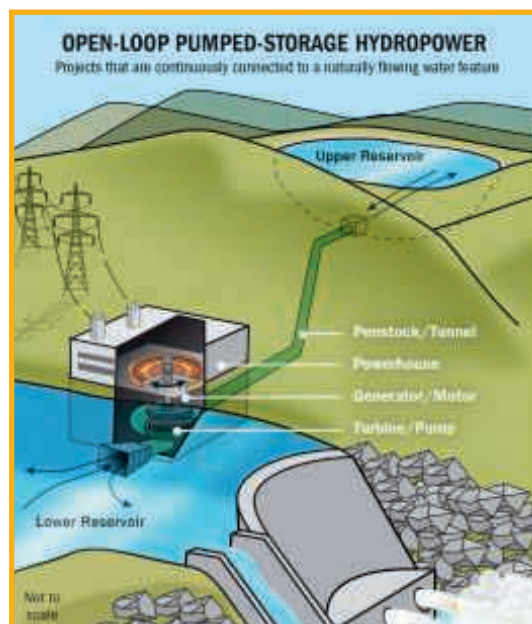
**During periods of high demand, power is generated by releasing the stored water through turbines in the same manner as conventional hydropower stations.**

Pumped hydroelectric storage facilities store energy in the form of water in a pool at higher elevations. These pools are filled with water from another water source at a lower elevation during periods of low demand, usually nights or weekends when electricity is at a lower cost.

During periods of high demand, power is generated by releasing the stored water through turbines in the same manner as conventional hydropower stations.

These storage projects have been operable since the mid 1920s. The Bath County Pumped Storage Station is described as the “largest battery in the world.” Located in the northern corner of Bath County, Va., this station has a maximum generation capacity of 3000 MW. The storage station consists of two reservoirs separated by 1260 feet in elevation. It is the largest pumped storage power station in the world.

Pumped storage stations are unlike traditional hydropower stations in that they are a net consumer of electricity, due to hydraulic and electrical losses from pumping water from lower to higher reservoirs.



Pumped storage facilities can be very economical due to peak and off-peak pricing and their potential to provide critical power quickly to the grid in case of emergencies. In the generating mode, the turbine generators can respond very quickly to frequency deviations which helps balance the stability of the grid.

Currently there are 69 operational units in the world larger than 1000 MW. China has 21 of these. There are 37 units under construction in the world larger than 1,000 MW. China has 32 of these.

I wish all members a safe and enjoyable fall season. Thank you for your patronage and support. God Bless!



Co-op Connections Card			
 <b>Cooperative Connections Card Program Vendors</b>			
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.
Home/Garden			
The Pink Petal	605-224-1775	Pierre	10% discount on cash and carry purchases - fresh floral only.
Slumberland Furniture	605-945-1997	Pierre	20% off any regular priced Lazy Boy items. Excluding special orders.
Services			
Airtech Heating and Cooling	605-945-0160	Pierre	\$50 discount on any new heat pump OR \$15 discount on any service call.
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.
Retail			
Fastenal	605-224-4060	Pierre	10% off of fasteners and 5% off on all other products.

## Winner of Question of the Month

The Question of the Month winners for the September 2020 publication were Robert and Kristi Schneider. They correctly answered the question, "Who is responsible for location of secondary electric lines?" The answer being the home/property owner.

Congratulations for providing the correct answer! They received an insulated grocery tote full of great prizes!

## Question of the Month!

This month's question is:

**How many combined years of service were recognized at this year's annual meeting?**

Please submit your answer via e-mail to [oahe@oaheelectric.com](mailto:oahe@oaheelectric.com) with the subject line reading: Question of the Month.

A winner will be chosen and a surprise gift will be sent to them.

## 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.



# HEALING PLACES

## Organizations cater to military veterans in need

**Billy Gibson**

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

*"After 21 years of learning to live with the scars, the limitations, the tremors and the nightmares...I can honestly say this experience has filled my heart with fresh hope." - Veteran Jason Cooper*

U.S. military veteran Jason Cooper needed some peace. He needed some quiet. He needed a reprieve from the rigors and stress of everyday life. So, Cooper gathered up his family and made the trip from his home in Kentucky to the Black Hills where he would find rest, relaxation and time for thoughtful contemplation.

Cooper and his crew spent a week-long vacation in a comfortable, cozy cabin in Custer as part of a project called Operation Black Hills Cabin (OBHC). Over the past 10 years, he and dozens of other wounded veterans have discovered a tranquil site to unwind and to enjoy the wide range of outdoor activities available in the area – all free of charge.

The program began as a service to provide veterans and their families with a free getaway and also as a means for organizers to express gratitude for the sacrifices made to protect freedom.

One of those founding organizers is Col. Marty Mahrt, a former Air Force pilot who joined the military in 1955 and flew 88 missions through two tours of duty in Vietnam. During his first tour, Mahrt was assigned to attack a munitions arsenal at Yen Bai Province. After releasing his ordnance and pulling away, Mahrt's F105 Thunderchief was hit in the right wing by enemy fire. The



aircraft began a downward spiral, but Mahrt was able to eject and was soon rescued by a helicopter squadron and flown back to the U.S. for surgical treatment of a severe shoulder wound.

While Mahrt and his wife Colleen are usually on hand to greet the veteran visitors to OBHC, the guests rarely get to hear of Mahrt's combat experience. As he puts it, "They don't need to hear anything from me. They have their own problems. I just listen to them and let them know that we're here to help them."

Mahrt said that he was eager to join Pat and Jeff Baird when they began gathering local support for OBHC back in 2011.

"Just knowing a lot of people who didn't make it back, and seeing the wounded warriors coming back from Iraq, that was something that motivated us to get involved. You see these families, the whole structure of the family changes when a soldier



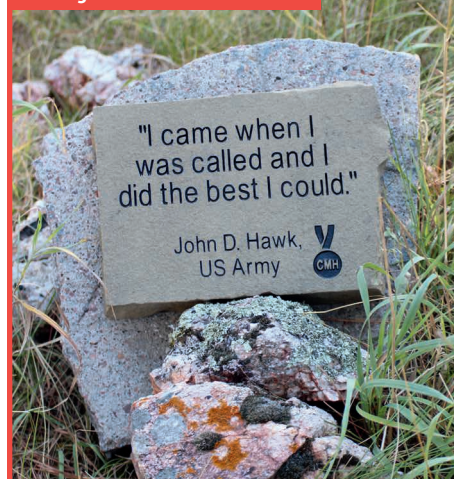


The Ranch Ministries in Blunt gives veterans an opportunity to hunt in one of the country's most prized pheasant harvesting territories.

and breadwinner is wounded and the wife has to take over," he said.

Mahrt points out that while the project isn't necessarily about providing psychological therapy for the veterans, there are emotional connections made in the process. He said a significant part of the program is the local community's participation. Business leaders and individuals provide free services or deep discounts for meals, entertainment, local tourist attractions and outdoor activities. The veterans also receive a gift card loaded with "Custer Cash" to help offset travel costs.

The Trail of Healing at Operation Black Hills Cabin has a series of messages etched in stone.



"We meet the families and welcome them," Mahrt said. "Sometimes the emotions get the best of me when I present them with their Visa card and they start crying and give me a hug. Sometimes you get emotional."

OBHC Board Secretary Ione Fejfar said the support of the community and way the residents of Custer treat the veterans and their families is part of the strength of the program.

"The people of Custer are absolutely wonderful," she said. "They really roll out the red carpet for them and everywhere our veterans go, they are treated with respect and honor and friendship. Between the cabin and the town, this is a very healing place."

She said every veteran who visits the cabin is asked to compose a brief letter of gratitude to the community that's published in the local newspaper.

## Oahe Electric Lends a Hand

The Ranch Ministries was founded by Marine veteran Ken Korkow on 540 acres in Blunt, roughly 20 miles east of Pierre. It's a faith-based retreat center he created to offer military veterans an open space to take part in team-building exercises, outdoor hunting and shooting sports, dirt track racing, firearms safety training, horseback riding and more.

According to Korkow, there's also a lot of bonding among brothers and spiritual growth that takes place along with all of the fun and games.

"We share the story of Christ, the one who heals and gives us purpose," said Korkow, who received citations for the Navy Cross and the Purple Heart.

Korkow explained the center is not only

open to veterans but to surrounding communities as well. Youth groups and adults have visited to participate in firearm safety and team-building exercises.

"A lot of people come here to get away from their everyday lives," he said. "We take care of the needs of our veterans, but we also depend on support and volunteers from the community for our success and we open our doors to those who want to come here and find fulfillment."



Liz and Ken Korkow provide a place where veterans can go to seek spiritual healing.

One of those supporting organizations is Oahe Electric, which has responded to requests to provide material and manpower to meet the ministry's needs.

According to Oahe Electric Member Services Manager Russ Hohn, "The Ranch has had a meaningful impact in our community and we've been able to give back through our Operation Round Up program, which is funded by our members. It's a prime example of our cooperative and our members demonstrating one of the seven cooperative principles: Concern for Community."





Co-op members register for the annual meeting.

## 68TH ANNUAL MEETING HELD

Oahe Electric held its 69th annual meeting outside the high school in Onida, S.D. on Saturday, Oct. 3, 2020. Due to continuing public health concerns, the meeting structure was modified from the typical in-person, sit down meal version, to a drive-thru style. This did not seem to deter members, as there were 303 registered members, which happens to be the exact same number as the 2019 meeting!

Members were able to simply drive up, receive their registration packet, cast their vote and head home! It was that easy, and they all received a \$40 bill credit for taking the time to attend their meeting.

Included in this year's registration packet was a program with the 2019 financials and short reports from Office Manager Valerie Marso, Operations Manager Matthew Eldridge and Member Services Manager Russell Hohn. Also included was a short welcome address and farewell note from General Manager Rodney Haag. After 43 years with Oahe

Electric, Manager Haag has decided it is time to enjoy some retirement!

Another note that was included with the registration packet was a list of the Years of Service awards for employees and directors. While this is normally announced at a traditional meeting and a moment is taken to recognize the accomplishments of these individuals, we were unable to do that this year. So we would like to



Oahe Electric's General Manager Rodney Haag greets members as they come to the co-op's drive-thru style annual meeting.





Co-op members attend their drive-thru style annual meeting.

say another congratulations to: Blaine Livermont, director, five years; Steve Long, material/work order/AMR agent, five years; Brady Gaer, journeyman lineman, 10 years; Valerie Marso, office manager, 20 years; and Mark Bruning, line foreman, 25 years. Thank you all for your continued dedication to your cooperative!

There was also a director election at this year's meeting. Ken Gillaspie, Ryan Noyes and Kirk Yackley submitted petitions for the two available positions.

Polls were open from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. After polls closed, the votes were tallied, and attorneys David Larson and Jessica Hegge announced the successful director candidates as: Kirk Yackley and Ryan Noyes. Kirk has been an Oahe Electric board member for about seven years and we are happy to have his continued leadership on the board. Ryan is newly elected to his position and we welcome the opportunity to work with him on the future of the cooperative.

We would like to sincerely thank Ken Gillaspie for his years of commitment to the cooperative and wish him all the best with his future endeavors.

Thank you to all who came to the meeting and helped to make this year's annual meeting such a great success!



Co-op Attorney Jessica Hegge oversees ballot collection for director elections.

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The South Dakota National Guard has been responsive in helping co-ops restore power to their members after natural disasters.

# S.D. NATIONAL GUARD

## Co-ops, SDNG work together to meet challenges

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

The South Dakota National Guard and the state's rural electric cooperatives share a synergistic relationship that goes back for decades. Both the Guard and the co-ops are highly skilled, highly motivated and highly prepared to respond in an emergency situation and to deliver help when and where it's needed.

For cooperatives, the response typically centers around restoring power after a natural disaster so that members can return their lives and their business operations back to normal as soon as possible. The state's 28 electric co-ops are part of a state, regional and national mutual assistance agreement that assures help will arrive when needed, and that, in turn, help will be dispatched upon request.

Cooperative operations personnel throughout the state work in conjunction with the South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) in Pierre to formulate and maintain an emergency work plan designed to help expedite the process of responding to a natural disaster.

According to SDREA Manager of Loss Control Services Mark Patterson, the more than 125,000 electric co-op consumers across South Dakota can rest assured their local power provider has the resources available to meet any and all challenges.

"We have a well-connected professional network of electric co-ops in South Dakota that's made up of exceptionally skilled linemen and supervisors who are absolutely the best in the business," Patterson said. "They have the experience they need to do the job as quickly and safely as possible, and they also have the resources at their disposal to rebuild the system and get the

power back on for our members who desperately need it."

Similarly, emergency preparedness is the South Dakota National Guard's stock in trade; although the Guard's scope of emergency response is quite broader. Not only do soldiers stand ready to be deployed to just about anywhere across the globe at a moment's notice, they also are trained to assist in a variety of stateside tasks.

The Guard's heroic work after the Rapid City Flood, The Spencer Tornado, the 1997 blizzards and the 2011 mass flooding are just a few active duty missions where the Guard came to the rescue to help save and protect life and property.

Most recently and most prominently, the Guard has been summoned to help contain and control politically-motivated



Co-op crews have relied on the National Guard to assist in power restoration efforts.





The National Guard and electric cooperatives share a commitment to serve the citizens of South Dakota, especially in stressful times.

violence and also deal with problems brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

After a coronavirus outbreak at Smithfield Farms in Sioux Falls made national headlines, the Guard deployed 25 ambulance teams - including four air support teams - and was recruited to conduct contact tracing in both Sioux Falls and Rapid City. Roughly 2,600 Smithfield Farms employees and their family members were tested for the virus with the assistance of National Guard personnel.

Gov. Kristi Noem expressed her appreciation for the work of the National Guard soldiers. "We knew they would be ready, they always are, but I don't want anyone to take for granted how blessed we are to have men and women in our South Dakota National Guard that continue to step up."

Lt. Col. Anthony Deiss, Director of Public Affairs for the South Dakota National Guard, recalls being personally involved in previous missions to help electric cooperative crews transport poles and other equipment, control work zones along roadways and pull vehicles out of wet, muddy ditches.

He said the soldiers take a great deal of pride in their work and approach their respective missions with the same commitment to serve as cooperative line crews demonstrate on a daily basis.

"We've had a tremendous partnership with the electric cooperatives when working alongside them to help respond to winter storms over the years. Our co-ops are on the front lines when providing power restoration during and after natural disasters, and they serve a critically important role in public health and safety. Anytime the SDNG is called up by the state to assist our co-ops in their mission, we look forward to the opportunity to support them."

"It's important for different state agencies and organizations to coordinate and work together during emergencies. These

relationships are vital to our state and communities to help quickly mitigate, respond and recover from these disasters. We provide a variety of resources to assist civil authorities to ensure the safety and well-being of our citizens."

Patterson of SDREA concluded: "I think this is one of the things that makes our state very unique, the sense that we all need to pull together, especially in a crisis. Neighbors helping neighbors...that's what our National Guard and our co-ops are all about."



The National Guard takes pride in helping electric co-ops reconstruct downed power lines and poles.





# PHEASANT SEASON

## GFP Commission reminds hunters of new rules for 2020

**Billy Gibson**

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Pheasant hunters, field guides and other service providers received some welcomed news from the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission in September. The Commission approved new rules that are sure to make hunters happy, even as reports indicate that resident combination licenses are up 25 percent year-to-date compared to September of 2019.

The Commission approved the following rule changes:

- Extending the state's pheasant hunting season through Jan. 31
- Modifying shooting hours for the first week of the season from noon to 10 a.m. CT beginning Oct. 17
- Increasing the daily bag limit from three to four roosters beginning Dec. 1, 2021.

Commissioners noted that while the new rules may please hunters, increasing the bag limit will not have a negative effect on the overall pheasant population as field research indicates a rooster can breed with up to 10 hens during the annual breeding cycle.

According to Heather Villa, wildlife administration chief, pheasant hunting enthusiasts and others involved in the industry can expect a robust season this year.

"Our information shows that license holders are purchasing their licenses earlier in the year. This is to be expected with having better weather compared to last year's extended winter," Villa said. "We are showing the highest resident annual fishing and resident combination license sales in five years. Nonresident annual fishing licenses are up 32 percent and are trending similarly to



Due to sound conservation and habitat management practices, South Dakota remains a prime destination for pheasant hunters across the nation.

2018, but are still lower than 2016 and 2017."

Villa added that hunters can expect even more abundant opportunities to pursue their passion for the sport in the future thanks to the Habitat Stamp initiative, which was signed into law this summer and is part of Gov. Kristi Noem's Second Century Initiative designed to improve the habitat and ensure future generations are able to enjoy the thrills and excitement of pheasant hunting. Just weeks after the law took effect on July 1, more than \$600,000 in revenue was produced from the sale of over 8,000 resident licenses and 15,000 non-resident licenses.

Revenue from the Habitat Stamp program can only be used to



develop habitat on public land and waters or to provide public access to private land. The stamp is required for anyone 18 or older when purchasing or applying for a hunting, fishing or furbearer license. The annual fee is \$10 for residents and \$25 for non-residents. The fee is not required for a one-day hunting or fishing license, youth hunting license, private shooting preserve license and other exempted categories.

The program was instituted as a means of not only preserving and expanding prime pheasant habitat but also as a way to make sure South Dakota maintains top billing as a pheasant hunting destination – and the economic activity and development that comes along with it. State officials describe it as a “win-win” for not only hunters but photographers, birders, kayakers, anglers and anyone who loves the outdoors.

**Supporters of the new legislation say it's the state's sound habitat conservation and management practices that make South Dakota a prime destination for hunters throughout the country.**

Supporters of the new legislation say it's the state's sound habitat conservation and management practices, in conjunction with the willingness of the outdoors community to see the big picture, that make South Dakota a prime destination for hunters

throughout the country. With a pheasant population that exceeds 7 million, the state is consistently best in the country for bird counts and harvests. Last year, hunters bagged nearly 900,000 birds during pheasant season.

Here are some helpful tips for a successful hunt:

- Don't under-gun. Use a 1-1/4 ounce load of #4 lead shot or 1-1/8 ounce of #2 steel shot.
- Use a dog. Crippled birds can be hard to find without a dog. Concentrate on cover that complements the hunting style of your dog.
- Hunt remote pockets. Search for secluded pockets that may have escaped the hunting pressure of large groups. Small sloughs, plum thickets and fence vegetation hold pheasants.

## Bacon Stuffed Pheasant



- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 2 pheasant breasts, boned and pounded | 2 tablespoon sour cream                                     |
| 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs              | 1/3 cup smoked almond, chopped                              |
| 1/2 teaspoon seasoning salt           | 1/4 cup Brooster's Original Pheasant Nuggets finely chopped |
| 1/2 teaspoon pepper                   |   |
| 2 teaspoons butter                    | 4 strips double smoked bacon                                |
| 1/2 cup onion, finely chopped         | 1/2 cup chicken broth or water                              |
| 4 oz. pepper jack cheese              |   |

Preheat oven to 350-375 degrees. Gently pound raw pheasant breasts on both sides. Heat oil in pan, brown onions on medium. Stir in pheasant nuggets and smoked almonds, heat for one minute to combine flavors. In a mixing bowl, combine sour cream, seasonings, breadcrumbs, browned onions and pheasant nuggets. Melt butter and stir into stuffing mixture. Spoon the stuffing mixture equally in the center of each breast and place pepper jack cheese on stuffing and roll it up. Wrap a slice of bacon around each rolled up stuffed breast. The back will hold it together. Place in baking pan and bake for 50 minutes, or until the meat is tender.

### South Dakota Tourism/Broosters

- Aim for the front half. Pheasants are not particularly fast, but many hunters shoot behind them. Lead the head, not the body, for a clean kill.
- Prepare for the weather. Fall can be a time of wide-ranging conditions. Plan to hunt in weather from sunny and 70 degrees to snow and below-zero wind chills.

More information can be found at <https://gfp.sd.gov>.

## Visit Co-op Connections Plus

Take a moment to visit our new online companion to Cooperative Connections. Co-op Connections Plus is a YouTube channel that features a more in-depth treatment of stories appearing in this publication as well as other subjects of interest to rural South Dakotans.

Search for “Co-op Connections Plus” and you’ll find videos on human trafficking, the State High School Rodeo finals, grain bin safety, the Co-ops Vote campaign and more. Be sure to “like” and “subscribe.”



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

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**October 22**

Butte County CFEL Annual Christmas Fair, Newell City Hall, Newell, SD, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 605-456-9837

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**October 24**

Ladies Day Shopping Extravaganza, The Crossing Bar, Mina, SD, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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**October 29-30**

Helping with Horsepower's Phobia - A Haunted Trail, Reclamation Ranch, 40789 259th St., Mitchell, SD, 7-11 p.m. 605-770-2867

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**October 31-November 1**

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Assn. Sioux Falls Classic Gun Show, 3200 W Maple St. Sioux Falls, SD, 605-630-2199

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**November 1 and 15**

VFW Bingo, Wall Community Center, Wall, SD, 605-279-2663

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**November 6-8**

YFS Kids Fair, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD

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**November 7**

Fall Fling Craft/Vendor Fair, Dakota Christian School, Corsica, SD, 605-366-7940

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**November 7**

Fairburn Community Center Bazaar, Fairburn, SD, 5:30 p.m., 605-255-4807

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**November 7**

Silver Star Bazaar, Lake Norden Community Center, Lake Norden, SD, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



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**November 7**

BH Meat Fest, Fundraiser for Shriner Patient Camps, BH Harley Davidson, Rapid City, SD, 605-415-3577

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**November 7**

Helping with Horsepower's RibFest, 4 p.m., Reclamation Ranch, Mitchell, SD, Contact mattcarter1421@gmail.com to register your team

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**November 11**

MasterChef Junior Live, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD

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**November 12**

Zonta Club of the BH Expo, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

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**November 14**

Winter Marketplace Pop Up, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

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**November 14**

Annual Holiday Extravaganza, Sisseton Area Merchants and Crafters, Sisseton, SD, 605-698-7425

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**November 17**

Baby Shark Live, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

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**November 20-21**

Holiday Arts Christmas Show, 112 E. 5th St. Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD, 605-359-2049

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**November 21-22**

Winterfest: A Winter Arts Festival, 203 S. Washington St., Aberdeen, SD, 605-226-1557

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**November 27**

Black Friday Trap Shoot, Sioux Falls Izaak Walton League, 10:30 a.m., Lunch Available, 5000 North Oakview Place, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-332-9527

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**December 5**

Rapid City Garden Club's 59th Annual Wreath and Centerpiece Sale, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Lions' and Bridger Buildings, Central States Fairgrounds, Rapid City, SD, 605-343-0710

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**December 5**

Festival of Trees, Newell City Hall, Newell, SD, Admission: Two Cans of Non-Perishable Food Items Per Person, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**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.**