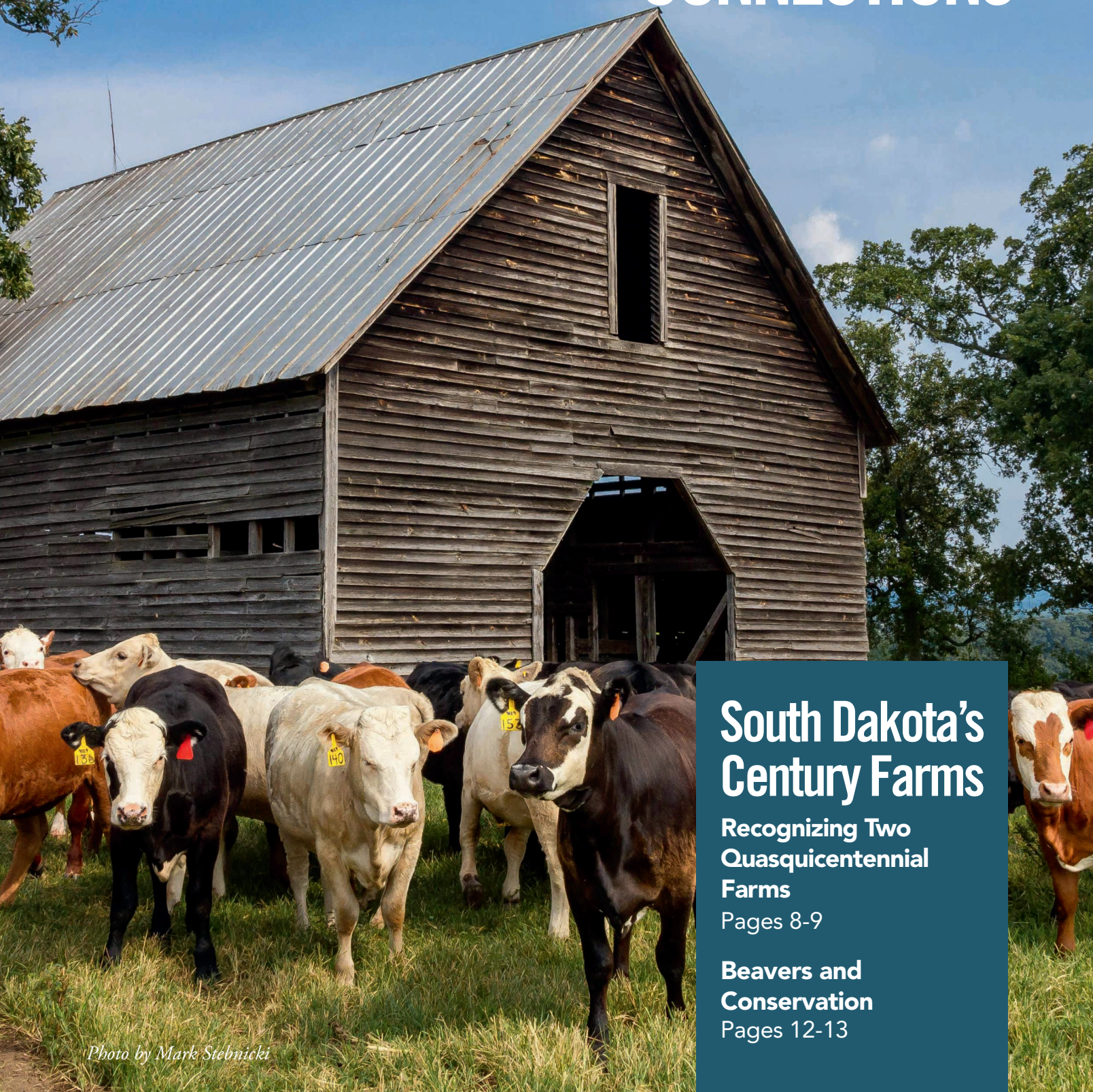




# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## South Dakota's Century Farms

Recognizing Two  
Quasiquicentennial  
Farms

Pages 8-9

Beavers and  
Conservation

Pages 12-13

*Photo by Mark Stebnicki*



# Summer of '69



**Jordan Lamb**  
Chief Executive Officer

One of my favorite songs growing up – Bryan Adams – Summer of '69! Oahe Electric comes into a busy summer of '24 with our own lyrical twist – electrical infrastructure projects.

In last month's article, I referenced electrical transmission infrastructure that provides downward pressure to our member owners. One pursuit our staff works diligently on to provide member-owners with value – grants.

To any onlooker passing by this road in central South Dakota may seem regular. To me, it's heaven! Oahe recently received a federal and state grant to convert overhead to underground wire. The small green box next to our existing power pole will become our future junction point for line that lies buried 4-5 feet below the soil. This line lies to the right of the 'green box' and will allow farmers to safely farm without risk of overhead line contacts on equipment. Line we bury carries three times the loading capacity of the existing line, providing future expansion opportunities to our local communities.

This particular line project that was awarded a grant specifically targeted a critical asset – Water Treatment. Oahe Electric provides electrical service to treatment facilities that provide water from here to the James River Valley. Buried line provides a hardened system backbone that improves reliability to not only that service, but to all of our members along the route of the line.

How does Oahe install line deep into the soil? Our staff works with K&H Electric alongside two – 85PX bulldozers – weighing near 90,000 lbs. each – to trench in line with a large 'knife'.



Our focus on infrastructure continues as a cooperative, hardening our system remains our #1 priority to supply ample electricity for generations to come.

As part of our infrastructure improvement and future load growth, we invited two of our local legislators to visit both our headquarters as well as a transmission facility we are making upgrades on with the help of East River Electric

Cooperative out of Madison, S.D. Will Mortenson and Mike Weisgram toured our facilities to see cooperative prospective on electrical infrastructure to help ensure future growth of our rural communities.

We appreciate you being active members of our cooperative! After seeing this picture, I realized it's time to shave. Thank you and God Bless all of your support in the summer of '24.

**Jordan**



## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

### OAHE ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 019-042)

#### Board of Directors:

James Feller – Assistant Secretary  
605.962.6207  
Brandon Haag – President  
605.215.6758  
Ryan Noyes – Treasurer  
605.280.3500  
Ross Sperry – Secretary  
605.280.7770  
Kirk Yackley – Vice President  
605.258.2412

#### Employees:

Tyler Arbach – Journeyman Lineman  
Austin Bergeson – Journeyman Lineman  
Mark Bruning – Line Foreman  
Matt Eldridge – Chief Operations Officer  
Trudie Feldman – Custodian  
Brady Gaer – Journeyman Lineman  
Sidney Geigle – Journeyman Lineman  
Sam Irvine – Administrative Services Specialist  
Megan Jaeger – Membership Director  
Les Job – Journeyman Lineman  
Jordan Lamb – Chief Executive Officer  
Dan Lettau – Journeyman Lineman  
Steve Long – Power Supply Specialist  
Valerie Marso – Chief Financial Officer  
Tory Smith – Journeyman Lineman

OAHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 216, 102 S. Canford, Blunt, SD 57522, for its members. Families subscribe to Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to Oahe Electric 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.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 216, Blunt, SD 57522-0216; telephone (605) 962-6243; fax (605) 962-6306; e-mail [oahe@oaheelectric.com](mailto:oahe@oaheelectric.com); [www.oaheelectric.com](http://www.oaheelectric.com)

#### 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.



**THANKS  
SO MUCH**

2024 Pierre Post  
Prom Committee

The kids had a night of fun with pool, bowling, darts, arcade games, art projects, food, a hypnotist, bingo and prizes for all that made it to the end

## Statement of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Person with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800)877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: 1.) mail - U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; 2.) fax: (202) 690-7442; or 3.) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.



# Prepare Your Family for Fire Emergencies

In only a matter of minutes, a small house fire can rage out of control, reaching temperatures of up to 1,500°F. In most cases, you have one to two minutes to get out safely.

We practice fire emergency drills at work and school, but don't forget to create and practice a home escape plan, as well. It is beneficial to keep your plan visible, like on the refrigerator, to help family and visitors remember what to do. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) stresses that even children as young as three years old can understand an escape plan.

### Helpful Planning Tips:

- Plan for two ways to escape from each room.
- Pick a meeting location away from your home.
- Plan for everyone in your home, including babies and others who may need help to escape.
- Teach children not to hide during a fire; they must get out and stay out.



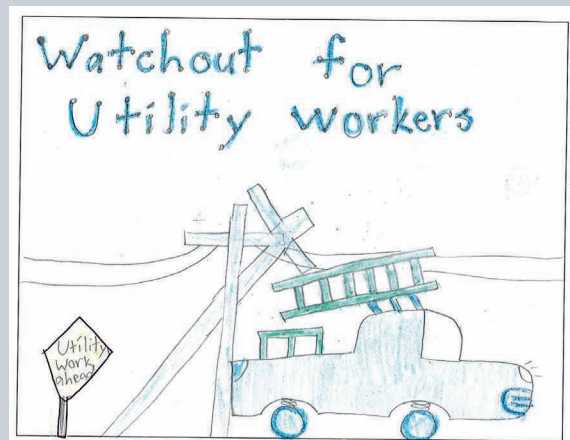
- Practice your escape drill with everyone in your family at least twice a year.

### Ways to Stay Safe:

- Clear toys, furniture and other clutter from exits.
- Check that windows open easily – fix any that stick.
- Test the batteries in your smoke alarms monthly.
- Be sure that security bars on doors and windows have a quick-release latch, and everyone knows how to open them.

### Special Considerations for Apartment Buildings:

- If you live in a multi-story apartment building, map out as many escape routes as possible to get to the stairways on your floor.
- If you live in a high-rise, plan to use the stairs – never the elevator – to escape a fire.
- A secondary route might be a window onto an adjacent roof or a collapsible ladder for escape from upper-story windows – purchase only collapsible ladders evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratory (UL).



### Stay Away from Power Lines

#### Reese Rindels, Age 9

Reese Rindels cautions readers to watch out for utility workers. Reese's parents are Rochelle and Kyle Rindels, 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.



# DELICIOUS *Dairy*

## CHOCOLATE FUDGE FROSTING

### Ingredients:

2 1/4 cups confectioners' sugar  
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
1/4 tsp. cinnamon  
6 oz. (3/4 package) cream cheese, softened  
3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) butter, softened  
8 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, melted and cooled slightly  
1 tbsp. pure vanilla extract

### Method

Mix sugar, cocoa powder and cinnamon in medium bowl until well blended. Set aside. Beat cream cheese and butter in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until smooth. Gradually beat in cocoa mixture on low speed until well blended. Gradually beat in melted chocolate then vanilla until well blended.

McCormick.com

## RED VELVET HOT CHOCOLATE

### Ingredients:

4 cups whole milk  
1/4 cup sugar  
10 oz. semi-sweet baking chocolate, coarsely chopped  
2 tsps. red food color  
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract  
**Vanilla Whipped Cream**  
1/2 cup heavy cream  
2 tbsps. confectioners' sugar  
1/2 tsp. pure vanilla extract

### Method

Place milk and granulated sugar in medium saucepan. While stirring, bring to simmer on medium heat. Remove from heat. Stir in chocolate with wire whisk until melted. Stir in food color and vanilla. Serve with marshmallows. For the vanilla whipped cream, beat heavy cream, confectioners' sugar and vanilla in medium bowl with electric mixer on high speed until stiff peaks form.

McCormick.com

## LEMON PUDDING DESSERT

### Ingredients:

1 cup COLD butter  
1 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened  
1 8 oz. tub cool whip, divided  
2 pkgs. (small) instant lemon pudding  
2 cups flour  
1 cup powdered sugar  
3 cups COLD milk

### Method

In bowl, cut butter into flour until crumbly. Press into an ungreased 9 x 13 inch glass pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 18 to 22 minutes or until set. Cool on wire rack. In mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and powdered sugar until smooth. Fold in one cup cool whip. Spread over cooled crust. In bowl, beat milk and pudding mixes on low speed for 2 minutes. Carefully spread over cream cheese layer. Top with remaining cool whip. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or more. Yields 12 to 16 servings.

Mary Jessen  
Holabird, S.D.

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Did you know ceiling fans can help you save energy? Ceiling fans create a windchill effect on your skin to make you feel a few degrees cooler. Raise the thermostat a few degrees and turn on fans to reduce air conditioning costs.

Set fan blades to rotate counterclockwise during summer months and clockwise during winter months. Remember, ceiling fans cool people but don't actually lower the indoor temperature. Turn them off when you leave the room.

Source: [energy.gov](https://energy.gov)



## Cooperative Connections Card Program Vendors

### Automotive

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

### Food/Convenience Store

<b>Branding Iron Bistro</b>	605-494-3333	Pierre	Enjoy \$1 off your order. Limit one per visit.
<b>Grey Goose Store</b>	605-945-0794	Pierre	Receive a free 20 oz. fountain soda or coffee with the minimum of a \$30 gas or diesel purchase.
<b>The Corner</b>	605-258-2400	Onida	Buy one breakfast sandwich at regular price, get second half off.

### Health/Fitness and Beauty

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

<b>Slumberland Furniture</b>	605-945-1997	Pierre	\$100 off a single item of \$599.99 or more. Some exclusions apply. See store for details.
<b>Lee Real Estate</b>	605-222-6003	Perre	Receive a FREE Comparable Market Analysis for real estate properties, which gives members current market values for home, land and commercial properties.

### Services

<b>Inman's Water Technologies</b>	605-224-5111	Pierre	Receive a 10% 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.
<b>Olson Plumbing Inc.</b>	605-224-6436	Pierre	\$50 discount on any electric boiler, Marathon water heater, or fireplace
<b>Small Engine House</b>	605-224-5815	Pierre	10% off parts and labor

### Sports/Recreation

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

<b>Fastenal</b>	605-224-4060	Pierre	10% off of fasteners and 5% off on all other products
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# April is for Auditors and Allocations!



**Valerie Marso**  
Chief Financial Officer

We have finally officially wrapped up everything accounting related for fiscal year 2023. Once the audit is complete, we can allocate the previous years margins to the members who contributed towards them. Most are still active but there are several that are no longer members too. Inactive and active members receive allocation notices, just in different fashions. Active members receive a notice on their electric bill, inactive members receive an allocation statement. Waiting until after the audit is completed ensures that there won't be any adjustments after margins are allocated.

## Auditors

Your cooperative's financial statements are audited every year by an outside firm, Eide Bailly. In their independent auditing report, they found Oahe Electric and the results of its operations and its cash flows to be free of any material misstatement and to be in compliance with the Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States as well as with the generally accepted accounting principles.

That's a lot of words that basically say your electric cooperative received a clean audit again this year and no adjustments to the books were necessary!

## Allocations Notices

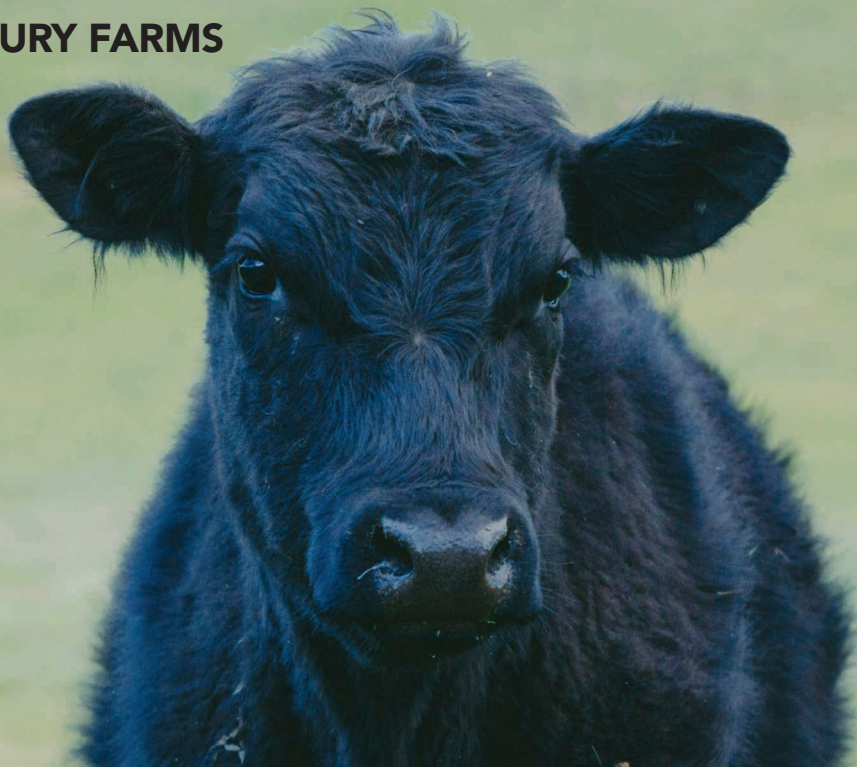
Each year, your electric cooperative returns their profits back to you – the member-owner. Any margins (what is left after all the bills are paid) get distributed to the members back in the same fashion it was contributed. For instance, if I paid \$1,000 for electricity for the year and Jane paid \$10,000, Jane would receive a larger allocation than me because she contributed more toward the margins.

Oahe Electric allocated its 2023 margins of just over \$1.5 million to its member-owners. While Oahe Electric had a positive year, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and East River Electric Power Cooperative also had financially successful years, which accounted for just over \$994-thousand of the total allocation.

Oahe Electric member-owners will receive their notices of capital credit earnings for 2023 on their May electric bill that they receive at the beginning of June.







# South Dakota's Century Farms

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

## Soukup Homestead: Raising families and farmers for over 125 years

Nestled in the heart of southcentral South Dakota lies a cherished piece of land with a name that's been long-established in Charles Mix County – the Soukup Homestead.

Almost anyone with Wagner ties knows a Soukup.

There are even a few members of the Soukup family who are also part of South Dakota's rural electric cooperative family, including Charles Mix Electric District 1 Director Denise Soukup.

But it all had to start somewhere, and good things take time.

That was the case for the Soukup's Century Farm and the Gronseth/Fiegel/Nelson/Evans homestead, a farm located near Britton that's served by Lake Region Electric.

Really, it's a common theme for Century Farm families to be located within rural electric cooperative service areas.

The South Dakota Farm Bureau and the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources began the Century Farm Program in 1984 to recognize farm and ranch families who have kept the farm in the family for 100 years or more.

Farms reaching the milestone of 125 years, known as

Quasquicentennial Farms, and the venerable Sesquicentennial Farms, marking an impressive 150 years, are also given their due recognition.

With over 3,000 families honored to date, the program continues to shine a light on the enduring legacy of South Dakota's agricultural heritage. To qualify for these prestigious honors, farms must encompass at least 80 acres and provide documented proof of their original purchase date. That means a family member must have always had ownership of the land over the last 100 years, including during the Great Depression and Dust Bowl.

The annual award presentation is a cherished tradition held at the South Dakota State Fair.

After migrating with family from what is now known today as the Czech Republic in the late 1800s, Joseph and Mary Soukup



Tom Soukup stands beside his Farmall Red International Harvester 460 tractor. *Photo courtesy of Linda Soukup*



came to the Dakota Territory at a time when most of the land open for settlement had already been settled.

While living in Tabor with family, Joseph Soukup applied for a homestead on reservation land that was now open for settlement at the U.S. Land Office in town of Mitchell on Jan. 30, 1896.

"In the following five years he built a frame house 13 feet by 18 feet in order to establish a residence, then a grainery, a corn crib, and he also fenced in 80 acres," said Linda Soukup, the wife of Tom Soukup. Her husband is Joseph and Mary's grandson.

Joseph and Mary raised ten children on the very homestead that Tom and Linda raised their kids.

"There's a lot of pride in the heritage and the legacy of, you know, having it passed down," Linda said. A new house was built on the site of Joseph and Mary's original home's structure in 1952.

That's where Tom and Linda lived and became the third generation to live on the homestead.

"When we lived here and Tom's parents and their brothers and sisters used to all come here," Linda said, as she started walking towards one of the farm buildings on the property referred to as "the shed."

"And they would butcher hogs and cattle and we would process them down there. We had a meat cooler in the basement. And then one of the families owned the meat saw and one owned the sausage stuffer," she recalled. "That was always kind of what we did until, well, families got bigger, and you couldn't. You just couldn't keep up, you know? We could have had a critter in there all the time," she said.

Tom and Linda raised their children – Becky, David, Kathy and Mary – in the house as well.

Their son David works as a project engineer for Phillips Petroleum in Texas. Two of their daughters live in different towns but remain relatively close to the homestead.

Kathy Jaeger lives in Tyndall and Mary Ringling lives in Platte. In 1996, their daughter Becky and her husband, Mike

Brunsing were living in Montana when Tom and Linda decided to move into town, so in 1998 the Brunsings moved back to South Dakota and began helping Tom on the farm while living in the house.

Becky raised three children of her own in the house she grew up in herself.

Becky and Mike still live on the homestead but in a more recently built home.

Now her son Dylan, 28, is raising his own family in the 1952 farmhouse.

In doing so, he became the fifth generation on the homestead.

Dylan and his wife, Keely, have two sons – a 20-month-old and an infant born in late March.

### **After 126 years, Torger Gronseth's homestead continues to bring family together.**

It's hard for Carol Evans to put into words how she feels when she reflects on the 126 years of history of her family's farm in Marshall County.

"It's so important to us," Evans said. Then she takes pause.

"I'm sorry, it's emotional for me," she says, before telling her family's – and the farm's – origin story.

In 1872, her great grandfather, Torger Gronseth, immigrated to America from Norway at only 14 years old.

He made the trip to join his eldest brother in Minnesota. He officially "staked his claim" and homesteaded in the Pleasant Valley Township of Marshall County in 1901.

Over the next two decades, Torger and his wife, Berthe Lea, amassed over 960 acres of undeveloped land in the Coteau de Prairie of northeastern South Dakota.

To each of their six children, Torger bequeathed a quarter of land.

The pioneering couple sold a quarter to their daughter, Louise, upon her marriage to George Fiegel for \$1.

While they were building the house that Carol and Frank Evans now call home, the Fiegels welcomed their first child.

"All of them were born in that house built in 1920. The first born was born on

the actual homestead. The house was being built when my first aunt was born," Evans said.

Louise and George owned the house and quarter of land until 1972, at which point ownership was passed onto their daughter Joyce and her husband Orvin Nelson.

"We bought the house in 2011. Last year after my mom passed, we were able to buy the entire quarter," she recalled.

Carol and Frank then got to work refurbishing the 800-square-foot house.

The Evans live in Arizona in the fall, winter, and spring months, but spent years renovating the farmhouse over the course of several summers.

"We go back in May every year, and we've renovated the house from the chimney to the basement," Evans said.

Their summer stay at the farm begins with the help of Lake Region Electric Association.

"The first thing we do when we get there is turn the power on. Then we turn the water on and then we mow," she said.

The week over the Fourth of July holiday is especially meaningful to Carol. That's when her grandchildren make their pilgrimage back to the Gronseth/Fiegel/Nelson/Evans homestead.

"They're always here around Fort Sisseton Days," Evans said.

The traditional agenda for the kiddos also includes picnics at Roy Lake, routine farm work, and touching up the paint on an American Flag pallet display located at the base of Torger Gronseth's tombstone.

"Every one of the kids has learned how to drive when they're back in South Dakota – because it's safe," Evans said.

Evans ensures the next generation knows their family history.

"They know their great grandpa was only 14 years old when he left Norway. The strength of the person to do that – the longevity of our genetic background, the struggle, and the fact that we're so fortunate – are something they'll understand," Evans said.

"And that it's home. It's never going to the farm. It's going home."

## Annual Meeting Set for September 21

It's hard to believe, but "that time of the year" has come around very quickly! It's time to start planning the annual meeting!

As a member of a cooperative, it is important to attend annual meetings in order to keep abreast of the happenings occurring here. Because remember – it's your cooperative and you are a member owner. Also, Oahe Electric is very interested in your thoughts or ideas concerning our annual meeting. If there is something that you would like to share, any ideas for changes, etc., please let us know!

So please mark your calendars for Oahe Electric Cooperative's 73rd annual meeting!

## Landscaping Help Wanted

Oahe Electric needs assistance with keeping our rock beds and landscaping in tip-top shape this summer. We are looking for a hardworking group or individual who will periodically weed the areas around our headquarters. Please contact us at 1.800.640.6243 or [oahe@oaheelectric.com](mailto:oahe@oaheelectric.com) with a proposal for yourself or your group.

## COVE HEAT SALE

Oahe Electric is offering great deals on our remaining Cove Heat inventory!

Call 1.800.640.6243 today to learn more!

# Oahe Electric Director Elections to be Held

The annual meeting of the members of Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held on Sept. 21, 2024.

During the annual meeting, the members present will be electing two board members to fill two, three-year position. Any individual who satisfies the qualifications and complies with the nominating procedures set forth below, should be prepared to serve a minimum of 24 to 36 days per year attending meetings on behalf of the cooperative.

Petitions are available at the headquarters in Blunt.

Should there be any questions concerning the bylaw procedures or if you would like to request a petition, feel free to call or stop in at the office. Petitions are due by **Aug. 14, 2024**.

## Bylaws Governing Election of Directors

### Section 3 – Qualifications:

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who: (A) is not a member and bona fide resident in the area served or to be served by the Cooperative; or (B) is in any way employed or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electrical or plumbing fixtures or supplies to members of the Cooperative; or (C) is an employee of the Cooperative.

Upon establishment of the fact that a director is holding office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, the Board of Directors, by official motion shall remove such director from office. Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatever the validity of any action taken at any meetings of the Board of Directors.

### Section 4 – Nominations:

Any fifteen (15) or more members acting together may make nominations by petition not less than forty-five (45) days prior to the meeting and the Secretary shall post such nominations at the principal office of the Cooperative. The Secretary shall mail with the notice of the meeting or separately but at least ten (10) days before the date of the meeting at statement of the number of directors to be elected and the names and addresses of the candidates nominated by petition. There shall be no nominations from the floor unless no petition has been filed for a vacancy. In that event only, nominations shall be taken from the floor for that vacancy, and nominations shall not be closed until at least one minute has passed during which no additional nomination has been made. No member may nominate more than one candidate.



# Understanding Your Oahe Electric Energy Bill

Use this guide to better understand the information found on your monthly electric bill.

## Did OEC receive my last payment?

This section shows total activity since your last bill, ending with your balance forward, if any. If any of this information does not match your records, call the Oahe Electric office.

## Operation Round Up®

For those who participate, this is your contribution into the Operation Round Up fund. Each month, your bill is rounded up to the nearest dollar, so the maximum contribution would be less than \$11.88 annually.

## Questions?

Call Oahe Electric at the number indicated or stop by the office.

## Our service location, meter and submeter information

We don't use physical addresses but use our own mapping system. This location identifies where your meters are located. The main meter accumulates the usage of your lights, electric water heater, stove and such. The submeter (located on page two of your bill) tracks the usage of heating and air conditioning in order to be billed at the special rate.

## Information and messages issues pertaining to you and your cooperative will be found in this area.

0000412602

**Oahe Electric** PO Box 216  
Blunt SD 57522-0216  
Your Townships Energy Cooperative

605.962.6243  
605.962.6306 -- Fax  
oahe@oaheelectric.com  
www.oaheelectric.com

Account Number [REDACTED]  
Statement Date 05/07/2020 Due Date 05/22/2020

Billing Summary	
Balance From Last Billing	2014.00
Payment Received 04/20/2020	2014.00 CR
Balance Forward	0.00
Current Charges	1668.99
Round-Up Contribution	0.01
<b>Amount Due</b>	<b>1669.00</b>

Page 1 of 3

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer

**Messages**

Statement reflects payments received through 5/7/20. Delinquent & subject to penalties if not paid by 5/22/20. Access SmartHub on our website @ [www.oaheelectric.com](http://www.oaheelectric.com) to manage your account, bill notifications, payments and more.

**Service Details**

LOC: 01-02-03 Desc: 01-02-03 M MAIN

Meter Reading Details		Meter 95882274
Current Reading:	04/30/2020	89177
Previous Reading:	03/31/2020	86298
Total Usage		2879
Billed Usage		972

Detail of Charges		
400M MV Security Light (Qty: 1)		10.00
Water Heater Credit		-4.00
South Dakota Tax		10.48
KWH Charge		127.48
<b>Meter 1 of 15</b>		<b>143.96</b>

**Monthly Usage**

Period	Daily kWh	Cost/kWh	kWh	Daily Cost
This Year	95	\$0.0831	2879	\$7.98
Last Year	131	\$0.0796	3932	\$10.43

**Usage graph** Explore and compare your usage for the past year.

**What do I owe and when is it due?**  
The total amount due upon receipt of this bill is shown. If this amount is not paid, your account is subject to disconnect.

**Amount Due** \$1,669.00

Account Number [REDACTED]  
Statement Date 05/07/2020 Due Date 05/22/2020

DO NOT PAY - Amount is automatically deducted from bank account

**Additional messages** This section shows additional messages regarding your bill, such as whether it is being paid via ACH or if you have a credit and do not need to remit a payment.

Oahe Electric  
PO Box 216  
Blunt SD 57522-0216

01

QR Code

## Security Light

If you have a security light, this area indicates the size (175 watts or 400 watts) and whether it is metered or unmetered. Metered means that all kilo-watts used are billed to the member.

## Water Heater Credit

This is a flat monthly \$4 credit for participating in the load management program with your electric water heater.

**More Information...** Other important information is noted on the reverse side of the bill.



# REBUILDING HABITATS

Beavers provide many environmental benefits including drought resilience, flood control and wildlife habitat. *Photo Credit: Richard Hamilton Smith.*

## BEAVER-INSPIRED STREAM RESTORATION

**Frank Turner**

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Centuries ago, the arrival of European traders in North America marked the beginning of a multi-century hunt for furs. The pelt of the North American beaver was at the forefront of this fur trade, prized for its use in crafting felt hats. These stylish hats fueled an ever-increasing demand for beaver furs that persisted for centuries, leading to a severe decline in beaver populations. By the early 1900s, beavers had become critically endangered, nearly vanishing from the expansive wetlands across the continent.

As the beavers dwindled, so did their dams. Lazy streams and rivers, once

tamed by beaver dams, began to flow more rapidly. The disappearance of the dams caused waterways to narrow and floodplains essential to willow trees and cottonwoods to vanish. The loss of these beaver-engineered habitats set the stage for the significant erosion of precious prairie lands.

In 2020, The Nature Conservancy set out to combat these issues by launching a project in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, South Dakota State University and local conservation agencies to restore stream health in western South Dakota.

“Our West River streams make up a small percentage of the total landscape – just under two percent of our total acreage is stream and valley

bottom,” said Lori Brown, riparian health program manager with The Nature Conservancy. “Yet, nearly everything in the prairie depends on these streams, including us in our rural communities.”

Prior to launching the project, The Nature Conservancy engaged local landowners in discussions to best understand their challenges and needs. During the discussions, several landowners faced similar issues: streams were eroding the land, fence lines were being washed away, and the water table was too low. Despite having effective tools for managing grasslands, landowners lacked the means to best maintain healthy streams.

“We needed to explore options



that any landowner could implement – strategies that didn't require a hydrologist to implement or an engineer to design," Brown said. "Our ranchers and landowners are some of the best stewards of the land. A lot of them are hungry for information and tools that can help them help the land."

The solution was simple, inspired by the ingenious works of an aquatic rodent: an artificial beaver dam. After all, if a beaver can engineer a dam, why can't a landowner?

Known as beaver analog devices, these simple speedbump-like structures quickly became integral to a broader strategy known as process-based restoration, a method that uses nature to help nature. Composed of locally sourced sticks, rocks and mud, beaver analog devices replicate a key natural process once performed naturally by beavers centuries ago. When established correctly, they filter water,

slow fast-flowing streams, and even recreate floodplains.

After settling on a solution, The Nature Conservancy set out to implement the idea in the real world, working with 10 landowners to help build and record the effects of the simulated beaver dams.

"Every day that I go out to one of these sites and I see that the beaver dams that we have built aren't totally washed out, it absolutely amazes me," Brown said. "I've read the manuals and I know how it's supposed to work, but I'm always in awe at what we are able to accomplish with the right building blocks in place."

After four years of the project, Brown said there is a lot to be excited about as the benefits of the project are evident. Signs of stream restoration are well underway. Sediment is accumulating rather than eroding, and revitalized floodplains are sprouting new willow trees.

"Without any planting on our part, woody species are now returning to these stream channels," Brown said. "The next step will be to lean into the success of this project. We want to act as a support for our conservation partners and other interested landowners that want to see their stream condition improve on their properties."

Others have been inspired by demonstrations led by The Nature Conservancy and other conservation organizations in the state to take action to slow down and hold water.

"We are just starting to see some of the effects from our outreach and education side of this project," said Brown. "The most rewarding part of this effort has been hearing the stories from local ranchers and landowners and hearing them get excited about the project."



A rock structure installed to help prevent headcuts from eroding upstream reaches. Photo Credit: Joe Dickie, Generation Photography, Inc.





# Reliable Energy is in Jeopardy

### Steve Barnett

General Manager of the South Dakota Rural Electric Association, a statewide association that represents 31 member-owned electric cooperatives. He previously served as Secretary of State for South Dakota.



South Dakota's families and businesses rightfully expect their lights to stay on at a price they can afford. Our national energy policies should support our cooperative mission, which is to provide safe, reliable, and affordable electricity to our member-owners.

Unfortunately, our country is now confronted with a harsh reality – we are quickly approaching a point where there won't be enough electricity to go around.

The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) is the nation's grid watchdog. For years, the organization has issued a string of increasingly dire reports warning that threats to grid reliability are mounting, and more frequent rolling blackouts could soon become the norm. NERC's recent assessment predicts more than 110 gigawatts of always-available generation, enough to power about 35 million homes, will retire through 2033.

And all or parts of 19 states are at high risk of rolling blackouts during normal peak conditions over the next five years.

Keeping the lights on is not a partisan issue. Yet, politics and energy policy have had an outsized impact on how we got here. The current state of our nation's energy policy related to electricity can be summed up simply: Do more with less.

That's just not sustainable. From data centers to EVs, from home heating and cooling to the way we run America's farms, our nation is increasingly reliant on electricity to power the economy. As technology and energy demands advance, a recipe for rolling brownouts and blackouts is brewing.

Opposite that increasing demand for electricity is an alarming reduction in supply as our country shutter's existing always-available power plants to comply with various federal and state regulations.

### Jim Matheson

CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association that represents the nation's more than 900 not-for-profit, consumer owned electric cooperatives. He previously served seven terms as a U.S. representative for Utah.





South Dakota experiences extreme weather conditions throughout the year with temperatures rising above 100 degrees in the summer and falling far below zero in the winter. When the sun is not shining and the wind is not blowing, renewable energy sources do not fit the bill for reliability. We simply cannot fully retire power plants that still have a useful life ahead of them.

The final challenge to meeting our nation's energy needs is the arcane set of rules and regulations required to build anything in this country. The process for siting, permitting and building infrastructure – everything from solar farms, to pipelines to transmission lines – is mired in red tape and years of litigation.

These trends are not going to get any better in the coming years.

On April 25, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized four new rules to regulate power plants. The path outlined by the EPA is unrealistic, unachievable, and unlawful – exceeding the EPA's authority and disregarding Supreme Court rulings. It undermines electric reliability and poses grave consequences for an already stressed electric grid.

The American economy can't succeed without reliable electricity. Smart energy policy recognizes this fundamental truth, while keeping the lights on. This barrage of new EPA rules ignores our nation's ongoing electric reliability challenges and is the wrong approach at a critical time for our nation's energy future.

EPA finalized its rule against a backdrop of daunting threats to reliability as electricity demand surges and supply decreases. This will lead directly to more blackouts, higher costs, and uncertainty for America. That's a dangerous approach to regulation.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association filed a lawsuit with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit challenging the EPA over its unlawful power plant rule on May 9. This suit points out that the rule goes far beyond what Congress has authorized the agency to do, violates the Clean Air Act and disregards recent Supreme Court rulings. The rule hinges on the widespread adoption of carbon capture and storage – a promising technology that is simply not ready for prime time.

South Dakota's Attorney General is also one of several dozen that have filed suit against the EPA for similar reasons.

Policymakers cannot overlook the laws of physics or the reality of the current situation. Adding more renewable resources to the nation's energy portfolio can be part of the solution; however, since the wind doesn't always blow and the sun doesn't always shine, our country also needs a robust supply of readily available energy resources to call on at a moment's notice.

Any long-term solution requires policymakers to recognize the need for time, technology development and new transmission infrastructure. These are essential ingredients for an energy future that prioritizes reliable electricity for all consumers.

Electricity powers industries, businesses, and technology. It fosters economic development vital for medical facilities, ensuring the functioning of life-saving equipment. Reliable power is essential for emergency services, law enforcement, and disaster response efforts. It also fuels innovation by supporting research, development, and deployment of new technologies.

Keeping the lights on is vital to South Dakota's economy. The stakes are too high to get this wrong.



**JUNE 12-JULY 20, 2024**  
**Prairie Repertory Theatre**  
**Summer Season**  
Oscar Larson Performing  
Arts Center  
Brookings, SD  
605-688-6045



To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

**JUNE 1**  
**Spring Volksmarch**  
Crazy Horse Memorial

**JUNE 7-9**  
**Gumbo Ridge Wagon Trail Ride**  
Murdo, SD

**JUNE 8**  
**Mt. Rushmore Rodeo**  
Palmer Gulch Resort  
Hill City, SD

**JUNE 8**  
**Sportsman's Bash**  
2 p.m.  
Weston County Senior Center  
Newcastle, WY  
605-440-1842

**JUNE 9**  
**1880 Train Old West Shootout**  
5 p.m.  
Hill City, SD

**JUNE 14-15**  
**Fine Arts In the Hills Show & Sale**  
Hill City, SD

**JUNE 14-16**  
**Highmore's Old Settler's Day Weekend**  
Highmore, SD

**JUNE 15**  
**The Big Mick**  
The Mickelson Trail  
605-673-5154

**JUNE 15-16**  
**Friends of the Library Book Sale**  
Hill City Public Library  
Hill City, SD

**JUNE 18**  
**Double O Okobojo Oldies The Life & Music of Badger Cark, presented by Pegie Douglas**  
Mike Finley's Shop  
Sully County, SD  
RSVP Sully Co. Auditor  
605-258-2541

**JUNE 20**  
**Kadoka Ranch Rodeo**  
Kadoka, SD

**JUNE 21-22**  
**Scavenger's Journey**  
Yard sales, farmer's markets & specialty shops  
Wall, SD to Wagner, SD  
[www.scavengersjourney.com](http://www.scavengersjourney.com)

**JUNE 21-22**  
**Kadoka Reunion Weekend & PRCA Rodeo**  
Kadoka, SD

**JULY 4**  
**Philip Volunteer Fire Dept. Annual Firework Display**  
Begins at dusk  
Lake Waggoner  
Philip, SD

**JULY 19**  
**Gumbo Ridge Bronc Ride**  
Murdo, SD

**JULY 20**  
**Murdo Ranch Rodeo**  
Murdo, SD

**JULY 19-21**  
**Custer Piecemakers Quilt Show**  
9 a.m.- 4 p.m. each day  
Custer School Armory  
Custer, SD

**JULY 26**  
**Disability Resource Fair**  
11 a.m.-2 p.m.  
Main Street Square  
Rapid City, SD

**JULY 26-28**  
**Meghan Newsam Community Celebration**  
Murdo, SD

**AUG. 10**  
**Pioneer Auto Museum 70th Anniversary**  
Murdo, SD

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