



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

LACREEK ELECTRIC
APRIL 2024 VOL. 26 NO. 12

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Keeping the Lights On

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Community Outreach**
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Motor Vehicles and
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Lacreek Electric's Annual Meeting to be Held

Lacreek Electric's 76th annual meeting of the members is scheduled for Thursday, April 25th at the old American Legion Auditorium in Martin, S.D. Members will need to go to the American Legion Auditorium for the business meeting which will start at 6 p.m MT. Meal vouchers will be handed out to each registering member to use within the next 30 days following the meeting. There will be no capital credit checks at the meeting, as they are mailed out to the members in the first part of April and should be received prior to the meeting. Directors will be elected from the following zones:

- **Zone 2, East Bennett County, Brent Ireland**
- **Zone 4, East Oglala Lakota County, Marion Schultz**
- **Zone 7, Cherry County, NE, Tom Schlack**
- **Zone 9, West Oglala Lakota County, Donovan Young Man**

All positions are for three-year terms. Candidates must live in the zone they plan to represent. The petitions must be signed by at least 15 members living in the zone the candidate is running in. Petitions were available February 25th, 2024 and must be filed with the board secretary no later than March 25th, 2024. Lacreek's board of directors currently consists of 13 members representing nine zones. If you choose to run for a board of director at a non-profit organization such as Lacreek Electric, you have inherently accepted fundamental responsibilities in addition to a commitment of time and accountability to the cooperative on behalf of the members it serves. Keep in mind, the board has ultimate legal responsibility for the cooperative. A director must act in good faith, in the best interest of Lacreek Electric. A director possesses a fiduciary duty to Lacreek Electric and its members. A director has accountability for the assets and resources of the cooperative. They should never use their position on the board to advance their own private interests. A director should concentrate on the goals and vision of Lacreek Electric.

Article IV – Director Bylaws

SECTION 1. General Powers. The business and affairs of the Cooperative shall be managed by a Board of thirteen (13) directors which shall exercise all of the powers of the Cooperative, except such as are by law, the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws conferred upon or reserved to the members.

Section 2. Zones and General Qualifications of Directors. For the purpose of election and qualification of directors, the service area of Lacreek Electric Association, Inc., shall be divided into nine (9) Zones each to have the number of directors indicated:

- **Zone 1** shall consist of territory within the corporate limits of the City of Martin and shall be entitled to two directors.
- **Zone 2** shall consist of the territory designated as East Bennett and shall consist of all that portion of Bennett County east of the Range Line between Range 37 and 38 west of the Sixth Principal Meridian with such line extended north and south to the north and south boundaries of Bennett County, respectively, and shall be entitled to one director.
- **Zone 3** shall consist of the territory designated as West Bennett, west of the Range Line between Range 37 and 38 west of the Sixth Principal Meridian with such line extended north and south to the north and south boundaries of Bennett County, respectively, and shall be entitled to one director.
- **Zone 4** shall consist of the territory designated as East Oglala Lakota County and shall include all of that portion of Oglala Lakota County east of the Range Line between Range 42 and 43, and shall be entitled to two directors.
- **Zone 5** shall consist of all that portion of Jackson County (including the former Washabaugh County) served by the cooperative and shall be entitled to two directors.
- **Zone 6** shall consist of all of the Lacreek areas in Todd and Mellette Counties combined, and shall be entitled to one director.
- **Zone 7** shall consist of all the Lacreek area in Cherry County, Nebraska, and shall be entitled to one director.
- **Zone 8** shall be considered as a zone at-large consisting of all of the Lacreek Association territories and be entitled to one director elected from any place in the entire area including any of the zones heretofore defined.
- **Zone 9** shall consist of the territory designated as West Oglala Lakota County and shall include all of that portion of Oglala Lakota County, west of the Range Line between Range 42 and 43, and shall be entitled to two directors. In the event the territory of the Lacreek Electric Association, Inc., should be enlarged in the future, the enlarged portion shall become a part of the Zone numbered from one to nine, excluding eight as above described with the exterior boundary of which it has the greatest distance of its own exterior boundary contiguous.

SECTION 3. Tenure of Office.

- (a) Director shall be elected to serve a three-year term, with director terms staggered in such a manner that no more than five (5) directors are up for election in any one year
- (b) All directors shall serve until the close of the annual meeting in the year in which their successors have been elected and qualified. If an election of directors is or cannot be held, a special meeting shall be held for the purpose within a reasonable time thereafter. Failure of an election for a given year shall allow the incumbents whose directorships would have been voted on to hold over only until the next meeting at which an election shall be conducted.
- (c) In the event that the election results in a tie between two candidates, the winner shall be decided by the flip of a coin. In the event that there is a tie between three candidates, three coins shall be flipped, one by each of the candidates or their representatives, until an odd man shall have been established, and said odd man shall be declared the winner. In the event that more than three candidates are tied, the winner shall be determined by drawing lots in the form of slips of paper to be drawn from a hat, one of which shall be marked to designate a winner.

SECTION 4. Qualifications. No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director or hold any position in the Association who is not a member and bona fide resident of the area served or to be served by the Association, and in the case of a director, a resident of the zone from which elected. No person who is a close relative of an existing director, as the term "close relative" is defined by Section 9, may be elected to serve on the board of directors during the term of such close relative then serving. No person is eligible to become or remain a director who has been convicted of a felony criminal violation under Federal or State law within the 24 months before their election as a director or during their term(s) as a director. No person is eligible to become a director who is or has been an employee of the Association within the prior three years. No person may become a new director of the Association if they refuse to take or if they fail a drug test administered by the same Association's staff that also administers drug testing of the Association's employees.

SECTION 5. Nominations. Directors of the Cooperative shall be nominated by petition, signed by at least fifteen (15) members of the Cooperative, residing in the zone from which the candidate is to be elected, and stating the candidate's name, post office address, and zone which said candidate is to represent. Such petition shall be filed with the Secretary, not more than sixty (60) days no less than thirty (30) days before the day of the annual meeting. Not less than twenty (20) days before the annual meeting, the Secretary shall post at the front door of the principal office of the Cooperative, a list containing the name, post office address, and zone of each person so nominated. A true copy of such a list shall be posted by the Secretary prior to the commencement of the annual meeting at the site thereof. The Secretary shall mail with the Notice of Meeting, or separately, but at least seven (7) days before the date of the meeting, a statement of the number of directors to be elected and the names, post office addresses, and zone of the candidates. In the election of directors, each member shall be entitled to cast the number of votes but no cumulatively which correspond to the total number of directors to be elected, but no member may vote for more nominees than the number of directors that are to be elected from or with respect to any particular Zone. Ballots marked in violation of the foregoing restriction with respect to one or more Zones shall be invalid and shall not be counted with respect to such Zone or Zones. Notwithstanding the provisions contained in the Section, failure to comply with any of such provisions shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken by the Board of Directors after the election.

In the election of directors, each member shall be entitled to cast the number of votes but no cumulatively which correspond to the total number of directors to be elected, but no member may vote for more nominees than the number of directors that are to be elected from or with respect to any particular Zone. Ballots marked in violation of the foregoing restriction with respect to one or more Zones shall be invalid and shall not be counted with respect to such Zone or Zones. Notwithstanding the provisions contained in the Section, failure to comply with any of such provisions shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken by the Board of Directors after the election.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

LACREEK ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 018-912)

Board of Directors

- Wade Risse – President
- Brent Ireland – Vice President
- Scott Larson – Secretary
- Tom Schlack – Treasurer
- Clarence Allen – Troy Kuxhaus
- Cole Lange – Clifford Lafferty
- Neal Livermont – Marion Schultz
- Jerry Sharp – Connie Whirlwind Horse
- Donovan Young Man

Management Staff

- Josh Fanning – General Manager
- Mike Pisha – Operations Manager
- Tracie Hahn – Office Manager
- Kasi Harris – Finance Manager
- Sherry Bakley – Work Order/Staff Assistant
- Ashley Turgeon – Administrative Assistant
- Jessica Cook – Member Services/IT

Office Personnel

- Amy Pisha – Right of Way Specialist
- Cody Larson – Accountant
- Terri Gregg – Member Service/Billing Specialist
- Katrina Fish – Member Service/Billing Specialist
- Lisa Jensen – Member Service Representative

Operations Personnel

- Line Foreman: Jesse Byerley
- Journeyman Linemen:
 - Jordon Bakley – Dane Claussen – Lonny Lesmeister – Garrett Metzinger – Aaron Risse – Trace Scott – Damon Wangerin
- Apprentice Linemen:
 - Tee Allen – Les Cury – Kody Hagen
 - Matthew Kruid – Chayson Schofield
 - Riley Meis – Cameron York
- Staking Specialist: Ryan Pettit
- Warehouseman: Henry Johnson
- Maintenance Man: Justin Smokov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. This publication is mailed the 15th of the month prior to the issue date. Layout is at least three weeks prior to mailing. LACREEK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Lacreek Electric Association, Inc., PO Box 220, Martin, SD 57551 for its members. Families subscribe to Lacreek Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Subscription information: Lacreek 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 Martin, SD and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Lacreek Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 220, Martin, SD 57551

January Board Meeting

Highlights from Regular Meeting of the Board

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Lacreek Electric Association, Inc. was held in the office of the Cooperative, located in the Town of Martin, South Dakota, on January 16, 2024, beginning at 1:00 pm. All board members were present.

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Ashley Turgeon to record the board minutes
- Minutes of the December 2023 board meeting
- Employee policy updates
- Operating report for November
- November disbursements
- December Analysis of Investments
- New Members

The board discussed the following items:

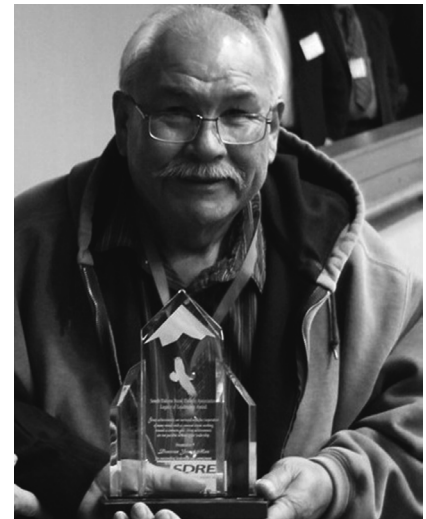
- Lacreek’s Annual Meeting
- WAPA Contracts
- Grants
- Co-op Day at the Capital

The board heard reports from management. These included details of operations, member services, communications, upcoming projects and safety. Donovan also reported on the SDREA Board Meeting he

attended. Troy and Marion reported on the SDREA Annual Meeting they attended and specially noted congratulations to Donovan for receiving the Legacy of Leadership Award.

No further business was brought before the board and the meeting was adjourned.

Next board meeting - February 19, 2024 at 1:00 pm.



**Pictured: Donovan Youngman
Legacy of Leadership Award**



CUT THIS OUT, FILL IT OUT,
BRING THIS TO THE
ANNUAL MEETING, April 25th, 2024
TO BE ENTERED IN AN ADDITIONAL GRAND PRIZE DRAWING!

NAME: _____
ACCOUNT #: _____ METER #: ____-____



Break Dirt Without Breaking the Law

As the warmer spring temperatures cause the ground to thaw, contractors and homeowners alike are likely to begin on projects that require some sort of digging.

By law, anyone who is digging in South Dakota needs to call 811 and have a locate ticket in their hand before moving any ground. If you're not the one that's digging and you've hired a landscaper to do the work instead, that landscaper should have a ticket in their name.

When someone calls 811, the call goes through a center in Dallas, Texas. That call center then notifies utilities in the area, according to South Dakota 811 Executive Director Codi Gregg.

An excavator or digger has to allow 48 hours for the utilities in the area they plan to dig into to come on site and mark the location of those underground utilities. On average, there are five to eight utilities notified per call.

If there's a potential loss of life or property, the allowed response time is shortened to a maximum of two hours during normal business hours.

"When the ticket goes in, the excavator is given a list of the utilities that are involved or are working or that are in that area where they're working," Gregg explained.

Those companies that own the utilities will make marks that identify the location. Those flags are also color coded according to the type of utility. As more and more overhead electrical lines are converted to underground lines, it's imperative that anyone who plans on doing a project that requires digging call 8-1-1 to avoid a dangerous and deadly situation.

"It's a free phone call for the excavator to make. There's no real reason for them not to make the phone call other than not being aware of it," Gregg said.

Kristie Fiegen, South Dakota Public Utilities Commission Chairwoman, echoed Gregg's comments, stating that making the call to 811 is the "most important and easiest call anyone can make before starting a digging project."

"This simple and imperative effort will help to prevent damages to vital underground utilities and safeguard critical services that our residents and economy depend on," Fiegen said. "During the 2024 construction season, I urge everyone to call 811 before you dig and protect all South Dakotans by abiding by our state laws and making safety our highest priority."

- Last year, there were 176,984 notices to the 811 Center of work occurring.
- South Dakota's 811 laws were established in 1993.
- In 2017, South Dakota 811 added damage reporting to our laws, stating if there was a damage, disturbance, or a dislocation of a utility – 811 was to be contacted to report the damage. It was also added that 911 was to be contacted first if there was a leak.
- Free accounts are offered upon request, allowing account holders to enter locate tickets themselves without calling an agent.
- A total of 1,944 utilities were reportedly damaged in 2023. Of that total, 375 excavators did not have a previous ticket.
- According to Common Ground Alliance's Damage Information Reporting Tool (DIRT) Report, the annual rate of damages to buried infrastructure costs the U.S. a staggering \$30 billion every year and 60% of nationwide damages to underground utilities are caused specifically by professional contractors not contacting 811 prior to digging.



Don't Fly Drones Near Power Lines

Lyndon Kaski, Age 8

Lyndon Kaski warns readers to stay away from power lines when flying drones. Great advice! Lyndon's parents are Jonathan and Amanda Kaski, members of Kingsbury Electric Cooperative.

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.

SALSA SAVORY

FRESH SALSA

Ingredients:

4-6 med. to large tomatoes, seeded and chopped
 1 med. onion, chopped
 4 fresh jalapenos, seeded and finely chopped*
 1 clove garlic, crushed
 1 tbsp. dried parsley or fresh cilantro to taste
 1 tsp. salt

Method

*To prevent jalapenos from burning your fingers, lightly rub fingers with shortening, especially around fingernails.
 Serve with tortilla chips.

Linda Hubbard
 Rapid City, S.D.

LUANN'S FRESH SALSA

Ingredients:

4 med. tomatoes, peeled and chopped
 1/4 cup finely chopped onion
 1/4 cup finely chopped green pepper
 1-2 tbsps. jalapeno or other hot pepper, seeded and finely chopped
 1 tsp. salt
 pepper to taste
 1 tbsp. lime juice or red wine vinegar
 1-2 tps. catsup
 dash garlic powder
 dash cayenne pepper
 1-2 tps. sugar
 cilantro (optional)

Method

Mix all ingredients. Serve with any tortilla or corn chips for dipping. Will keep approximately 1 week in the refrigerator.

Nancy Stenson
 Fort Pierre, S.D.

TAMARIND PASILLA MANGO PINEAPPLE SALSA

Ingredients:

1 1/4 cups diced fresh pineapple
 1 large mango, pitted and diced (about 1 1/4 cup)
 1 small red onion, diced
 1 small red bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh cilantro
 1 med. jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely chopped
 2 cloves fresh garlic, minced
 3 tbsps. fresh lime juice
 1 tbsp. honey
 4 1/2 teaspoons Tamarind Naturally Flavored & Pasilla Chile Seasoning

Method

Mix all ingredients in medium bowl. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes before serving. Stir before serving. Serve with tortilla chips or use to top tacos or nachos.

McCormick

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.

Celebrate Earth Day

Why Taking Steps to Conserve Matters



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services
Group

Earth Day is April 22, a time when we celebrate this beautiful planet we are lucky to call home. During this day of appreciation, I encourage you to take action at home by making changes to conserve energy. If we all contribute, even small adjustments and changes to how much energy we use can have positive impacts.

Electricity is essential to our daily lives. It gives us opportunities to learn, keeps us safe and comfortable and provides entertainment. The downside is that every source of energy generation has consequences. Fossil fuels emit carbon. Hydropower dams limit the passage of migrating fish. Even solar panels can't be made without mining minerals. Using less electricity is a way to mitigate the impact of producing the electricity that powers our lives.

Before diving into ways to use less energy, it's important to know the difference between conservation and energy efficiency. Energy efficiency refers to equipment that uses less energy to do the same job. For example, ENERGY STAR®-certified refrigerators keep your food just as fresh as standard models but use about 9% less energy to do it, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Conservation is using less energy by changing behavior and practices. For example, adjusting your thermostat to be closer to the temperature outside or turning off the lights or a ceiling fan when you leave the room conserves energy.

Conservation has the best return on investment. It's often free and can save a little or a lot – depending on what you are changing and how drastic of a change you make.

Let's start with what's typically the biggest energy user in the average household: heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment. Save energy while you sleep by programming your thermostat to be a few degrees closer to the outside temperature at night. In colder climates, add an extra blanket or comforter to your bed to keep you warm.

Typically, the second biggest energy user is the water heater. Replacing an electric storage water heater with a heat pump/hybrid water heater is a great example of an energy efficient project. Adjusting the temperature setting to the recommended 120 degrees and using less hot water in your home conserves energy. Wash clothes in cold water. When washing dishes, don't let the hot water run longer than necessary.

Earth Day also lends itself to thinking of ways we can connect with each other and limit our screen time. Look for electricity-free opportunities with your family or community. I like to unplug and get outside with friends and family. Going for a hike, a walk or even just spending time in your yard or local park is a great way to reconnect with others and nature. Before you head out, adjust that thermostat and turn off everything possible. Unplug chargers from outlets and turn off all electronics and lights.

I am grateful for this planet we call home. It offers so much to sustain us. Any small changes we can make to benefit the planet can add up if we all pitch in.

State Technical Colleges Offering Dual Credits

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

More and more motivated high school students in South Dakota are getting a leg up on their careers through dual credit programs offered by the state's technical colleges.

In fact, three high school students are set to walk away with their degrees from Lake Area Technical College this spring.

Lake Area Technical College President Tiffany Sanderson said more high school juniors and seniors are participating in the state's dual credit program to get a jump start on their career paths while saving a considerable amount in tuition costs.

"Students have ten different public colleges and universities in the state to choose from. At Lake Area Tech, the savings are huge. A student normally pays \$166 per credit but will only pay \$48 per credit through the dual credit program," Sanderson said. "That's a 70% savings on college coursework."

"It's popular for students to take both technical courses and general education courses. Often that first class helps them understand what they're interested in pursuing."

At Mitchell Technical College, more and more students are not only enrolling in the dual credit program but taking more

than one course during each semester. That's according to Carol Grode-Hanks, vice president of academics at MTC, and Hilary Vining, director of enrollment at MTC.

Vining said about 80% of those in the dual credit program just take one class.

"Students that take one class save \$570, while full-time students save \$3,500," Grode-Hanks said.

Vining said students enrolled in dual credit courses full-time typically only have their elective high school classes remaining.

"However, by taking dual enrollment courses, they have the opportunity to engage in hands-on learning and actively participate in practical activities," Vining said. "There are some kids that are ready to get out in the workforce and get as much as they can get done at a cheaper rate. It's becoming a lot more popular. Parents are getting more educated about the opportunity as well."

At Western Dakota Technical College, for the 2023-2024 school year, there are 310 dual enrollment students in the fall semester and 327 students in the spring semester.

Diana Newman, director of admissions at WDTA, said the school works with many students one-on-one to advise them toward a track to get ahead in addition to a graduation plan.

"Western Dakota Technical College aims to help make dual enrollment accessible. Through the use of grants, we have been able to support more students to have access to books, tools, equipment, uniforms, and other needed items to succeed in dual enrollment classes," Newman said.

Southeast Technical College President Robert Griggs said he's also seeing an increased interest in the dual credit program.

"Dual credit courses provide high school students the opportunity to explore different career fields and areas of interest, all while earning credits that count towards a high school diploma and a college degree," Griggs said. "Southeast Technical College works with area school districts to package dual credit learning options that facilitate the transition into college and entry into high-demand career fields."

Dual credit programs that fill up fast at Southeast Technical College include welding, medical and cardiovascular sonography, HVAC, electrician, nursing, and vet tech.

For more information on enrolling in the dual credit program, students and parents should reach out to their high school counselor's office or check out the options at <https://ourdakotadreams.com/high-school/dual-credit/>.



Students enrolled in Western Dakota Technical College's Dual Credit Program.
Photo courtesy of Western Dakota Technical College.



Elliot and Janaye Rayman at their second annual Barefoot Fitness Memorial Day fundraiser.

One Lineman's After-hours Outreach

Frank Turner

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Across the state, linemen are charged with keeping South Dakota's power going. It's a big responsibility: troubleshooting electrical systems, operating heavy equipment, and maintaining power lines. These workers are frequently asked to navigate high voltage and confront dangerous challenges in all kinds of extreme weather. In the face of these challenges, it takes a truly community-minded individual to ensure the community's lights stay on. Many of these crucial workers demonstrate their commitment to their community daily, both during and outside of work hours.

Butte Electric Journeyman Lineman Elliot Rayman, who has been with the cooperative for seven years, serves as just one example of an electric cooperative employee who has pulled extra hours for his local community of Spearfish, S.D. In addition to his role as a lineman, Elliot wears many hats in his community beyond just the hard hat of a co-op employee. He is a veteran of the National Guard, having served a deployment overseas. Elliot and his wife, Janaye, are also deeply involved in their community as the owners of Barefoot Fitness, a gym in the Spearfish community. Janaye, a cancer survivor, operates the gym and is an integral part of their community efforts.

Janaye and Elliot purchased Barefoot Fitness in 2018, fulfilling Janaye's long-standing dream of owning a gym. Shortly after their purchase, the couple learned that Janaye's cancer, previously in remission, had metastasized into Stage 4 breast cancer.

"In 2020, I had reoccurrence everywhere – brain, lungs, liver, bones," said Janaye. "Since then, I have been on a mission every day to heal and recover. It's also been my goal to help others every single day, day in and day out, and that's

what keeps me going. That's my job and it's what I love to do, so I'm not stopping."

"My wife is an inspiration to many people," added Elliot. "She is the strongest person I know."

Undeterred, Elliot and Janaye decided to press on and use their gym as a platform to engage with their local community. Despite Janaye's ongoing battle with breast cancer, the two started a new Barefoot Fitness tradition – an annual Memorial Day fundraiser to benefit South Dakota's gold star families, the families of fallen soldiers.

"After a few years of owning the gym, we decided we needed to give back to the community, because the community had really been there for us through everything," said Elliot. "We knew we had the ability and the platform to give back to the community through Barefoot Fitness, so we settled on a Memorial Day fundraiser that would benefit gold star families in our state."

This May, Elliot and Janaye will host their fourth Barefoot Fitness Memorial Day fundraiser. Like previous years, the event will feature local catering from Spearfish businesses, such as Spearfish Brewing Company and Timmons Market. The event will also include an optional community workout for all ages.

"We kick off our day with the National Guard leading the pledge of allegiance and national anthem," said Janaye. "We do a prayer, and then we do our Memorial Day workout. It's a team workout that people are encouraged to complete with their family or friends."

According to Janaye and Elliot, the team workout is about more than just breaking a sweat. Instead, it's about remembering those who gave their lives for this country.

"You always hear about people doing things for veterans, but you never hear about the story on the other side of

that – the families," Janaye said. "A lot of times the family is forgotten so we really want to honor the families that also made a sacrifice."

At the end of the day, Elliot and Janaye said none of their efforts would be possible without the support they have received from the Spearfish community, the veteran community,

and the electric cooperative community.

"Butte Electric and the co-op world have helped us out so much," said Elliot. "The culture of the co-op community is huge: there is brotherhood – it's the way people help each other out. You just can't ask for a better group of people, and that's the same way with the veteran world."



Janaye and Elliot lead a community workout session, challenging participants to complete 300 weighted ball throws.



Lacreek Electric Association Inc.
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

2024 ANNUAL MEETING

Come to our annual meeting and learn what your cooperative encountered in 2023.

JOIN US!

25 APRIL AT 6 PM



Registration Gift
\$20 Bill Credit



Meal Voucher
Redeem @ Participating Locations



PRIZES!
Lots of Prizes!
\$700 Cash & Door Prizes



More information
+ 605.685.6581



Visit our website
www.lacreek.com



National Linemen Appreciation

Photographed:

Front Row (Left to Right): Jesse Byerley, Aaron Risse, Henry Johnson, Mike Pisha, Dane Claussen, Trace Scott, Matt Kruid, Lonny Lesmeister Back Row (Left to Right): Riley Meis, Tee Allen, Justin Smokov, Les Cuny, Cameron York, Garrett Metzinger, Chayson Schofield, Damon Wangerin, Kody Hagen - Not Pictured: Jordon Bakley

CAPITAL CREDIT CHECKS



Check Your Mailbox

CHECKS ARE BEING MAILED THE BEGINNING OF APRIL

KEEP YOUR MAILING ADDRESS UP TO DATE IN OUR OFFICE

Lineman Appreciation Day - April 11th, 2024

It takes a special kind of person to want to become a lineman. The danger and risks are high, however, most of them feel the reward is even higher. There is a lot of pride that comes along with being a lineman. When the power goes out, how many people can say "I can fix that". Not just anyone can restore the power when it goes out. The men of Lacreek Electric are always quick to respond and take pride in making sure our members are put above all else. These men drop everything, in all types of weather, to make sure power is restored. As we celebrate Linemen Appreciation this month, please take time to thank them, we all would be lost without them. As we highlight the linemen here at Lacreek, I think it is also important to recognize the added value many of these men bring to our area. Many of these men have chosen to use their spare time coaching our youth and donating time to bettering the community. They're showing up for the next generation as role models for them to look up to. We are all very thankful for the light you all provide, in every form.

THANK YOU!

Apply Now!

Contact Jessica at Lacreek Electric to get more information!

You don't want to miss out on this all expense paid experience to expand your knowledge and meet new friends!



WWW.LACREEK.COM



Don't forget to submit your heat meter reading before April 30th!

South Dakota Rural Electric YOUTH EXCURSION July 22-24, 2024



- Learn where South Dakota's electricity comes from!
- Tour the Great Plains Synfuel Plant, Freedom Coal Mine and Antelope Valley Station Power Plant!
- Meet new friends!

People • Power • Purpose





SDHP Trooper Megan Koch stands by her patrol vehicle. Koch works within the state's Motor Carrier Division. *Photo Credit: Shannon Marvel*

COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

When commercial motor vehicles come into the state of South Dakota, it's the job of the South Dakota Highway Patrol's Motor Carrier Division to ensure the drivers of those vehicles have the necessary paperwork, permits and documents.

The task is one of public safety.

Making sure the carriers are adhering to safe driving practices is just another way to ensure that everyone is as safe as they can be while driving on the state's roadways.

South Dakota Highway Patrol

Trooper Megan Koch is one of the officers who works within the motor carrier division.

"Our main focus is making sure the motor carriers or trucks are safe on the roadways and keeping everybody else safe. It helps them perform their job of carrying their property or passengers across the state lines and within the state. We help make sure that they can do that job," Koch explained.

Mainly, Koch works specifically with commercial motor vehicles that carry over a certain weight or property of monetary value within the state or interstate.

"When we do an inspection on a driver, we're checking a bunch of different things. Weight sometimes is one of them, but not always. It just depends on the situation," Koch said.

"They have to have certain paperwork with them and they are required to follow certain rules. It depends on what they're doing."

The dependent variables include whether a carrier is traveling with goods within the state or going out of the state and how far away they are from the hub, or where they leave every day or go home to every day.

Koch also checks their paperwork to ensure the drivers are within compliance of state law.

"They have to follow certain hours that they can work so that they don't get tired while driving. It's a big thing that we follow for safety," Koch said.

"We also check things like

equipment violations, headlights, taillights, tires, you know, stuff that makes them safe on the roadway and keeps them safe. We'll also check for things such as bad driving behavior, if they're not staying within their own lane, using blinkers, not properly stopping at stop sign – stuff like that. So, if we see something like that, we can initiate an inspection."

Koch, a Plankinton native whose father was a truck driver, said the division is typically checking brake lines and lights.

In South Dakota, there are four main ports of entry. The ports are located along Interstate 29 in Jefferson and Sisseton, and along Interstate 90 in Sioux Falls and Tilford.

Each carrier is issued a "safety score," which is assessed by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

"That's based on whether or not they have the proper paperwork, if they're driving within their hours, if they have the proper equipment and whether or not they've received any driving or alcohol violations," Koch said.

If a driver has a high enough safety score, they aren't required by law to stop at a port for inspection.

Overall, it all comes down to keeping the roadways safe for everyone, regardless of what type of vehicle they are driving.

"These rules and laws are in place for a reason. They have to be extra alert and awake while they're driving and that all of their equipment works properly. If you're driving a very heavy, large vehicle, you need excellent brakes. You have to be able to stop in time. That is the main reason we're checking all these things. It helps everybody on the road."

The division also works

with rural electric cooperatives when oversized loads travel along the state's highway system, according to Lieutenant Austin Schmitz, District Four Assistant Commander with the South Dakota Highway Patrol.

Sometimes oversized loads require that overhead power lines be moved out of the way to let the carrier pass through.

"As a district we do work with a lot of the cooperatives such as East River Electric. We all get together when planning for oversized loads coming through our area," Schmitz said.

"They usually run the route first and let us know what lines they need to move."

That was the case when a massive generator was moved across the state. The generator was so heavy and huge that the truck carrying it could only travel 30 miles per hour. That truck was also equipped with over a hundred tires, Schmitz said.

"That generator came through Watertown a couple of years ago and we've got some more coming in two or

three years," Schmitz said, referring to the multi-million pound machines.

"The planning for those started last year. That equipment will be coming in through the Great Lakes on a ship. They'll pick them up there and then they'll move through our state then Wyoming, Montana, however they can go," Schmitz said.

The truck carrying the heavy equipment is too big to go across most bridges and overpasses, so finding a route that allows the machinery to snake across the country is tricky.

While moving huge pieces of machinery can be one of the more interesting parts of the job, it's the flexibility of the job that Koch enjoys most.

"I get to pick and choose where I want to go for the day. I get to do something a little bit different every day. Because, I mean, nothing is ever the same," Koch said.

"It's kind of nice to be able to do that and make the day what you want of it."



A SDHP officer has the latest technology at his or her fingertips to ensure trucks on South Dakota roads are operating safely. Photo Credit: South Dakota Highway Patrol

Fun and Unique Places to Stay in South Dakota

Scott Waltman

South Dakota is known as the land of infinite variety, and for good reason.

From the Black Hills to the Badlands to the rolling East River prairies and from scorching heat to bitter cold, South Dakota covers a wide swath of geography, weather and activities.

That carries over to places to stay across the state.

There are plenty of fun and unique Airbnb and Vrbo options in South Dakota with something to please everybody who doesn't need the hustle, bustle and traffic of a major metropolitan area. Not surprisingly, some of the best options are near water. Others are remote for folks who want to unplug for a few days, while some are near farms and ranches and offer the opportunity to help with modest chores, if visitors so choose.

Here is a look at some of the more distinctive and interesting staycation options in South Dakota.

Lookout Loft Treehouse near Valley Springs

How about planning a stay in a treehouse? That's possible with the Lookout Loft Treehouse near Valley Springs. Two decks, a fire pit, a hot tub and 360-degree views more than make up for any lack of space for a guest or two looking for a getaway that sets itself apart from most others. This rental is available through Airbnb.

Amenities

- Wrap-around deck
- Pillow-top mattress
- Hot tub

- Propane fire pit
- Kitchenette
- Air conditioning and heat

Mansfield Micro-Cabin

In the heart of the pheasant belt, this small Escape Vista trailer is ideal for hunters seeking for South Dakota's state bird or those who just want to escape. No city lights, no traffic, no interruptions. Just peaceful prairie surroundings with easy access to top-notch hunting. This rental is available through Airbnb.

Amenities

- Queen bed
- Full bath
- Patio
- Kitchen
- Backyard

Log cabin in Vanocker Canyon

There's a lot to like about this custom-built log cabin that's surrounded by the Black Hills National Forest on three sides. With 1,300 square feet, it's roomy and sleeps as many as eight guests. There's a deck, patio and hot tub, and the cabin is settled on 40 acres between Nemo and Sturgis. There's easy access to ATV trails and nearby golf courses. Take in the local history knowing Gen. George Custer camped in the canyon during the summer of 1847. This rental is available through Vrbo.

Amenities

- Gourmet kitchen
- 60-inch high-definition TV
- Deck and patio
- Log pool table
- Luxury bath
- Propane grill



Cabin over water on the prairie near Philip

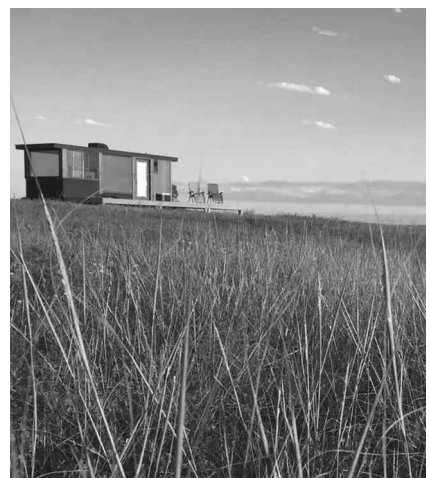
- Fireplace and fire pit
- Washer and dryer

Dennis Ranch near Red Owl

Settle in and enjoy a working cattle ranch that's a century old at the Dennis Ranch. Take a personal tour led by your hosts. Go for a hike, search for arrowheads and dinosaur bones or just enjoy nature and bird-watching. For an extra fee, guests can watch or help with day-to-day ranch work. Those who can ride horses can hop on and ride alongside working cowboys and ranchers. Visitors will stay in a house with the hosts, who will happily share the history of the land and ranch.

Amenities

- Two bedrooms
- Dedicated workspace
- Wi-Fi
- Washer and dryer
- Fire pit
- Shared patio



Mansfield Micro-Cabin



The Still House near Rapid City

The Still House near Rapid City

How's a tent with an attached deck sound for a unique option? That's what The Still House offers. Visitors won't exactly be roughing it with sleeping bags on the ground. The 16-foot-by-13-foot wall tent is more like luxury camping near the Black Hills. A heated shower is attached and there's a private, odor-free, environmentally friendly "outhouse" just a few steps away. This rental is available through Airbnb.

Amenities

- Wood-burning fireplace
- Private deck
- Barbecue grill and outdoor kitchen
- Fire pit
- Outdoor shower
- Outdoor furniture and dining area
- Hammock

37-foot recreational vehicle near Hot Springs

If you don't have your own RV, but you're willing to stay in one, here's something to consider. This large RV offers a few extras, including a beautiful patio overlook and a hot tub. The Evans Plunge mineral springs are just a 15-minute drive away. This rental is available via Vrbo.

Amenities

- Seven beds, including three bunk beds
- One full bath
- Private property with an overlook view of Hot Brook Canyon

- Propane fire pit
- Hot tub available upon request
- Mountain view

Cabin over water on the prairie near Philip

Relax and enjoy in this locally constructed prairie home that sits along the bank of a small dam. Don't expect the bells and whistles offered by a top-end motel room. This is a place for people who enjoy nature and the outdoors. Hop in a kayak and row away a portion of the day while getting a little exercise. This rental is available via Airbnb.

Amenities

- Four queen beds
- 43-inch TV
- Private patio
- Kayak
- Grill
- Fire pit

The Lodge at Broken Arrow Farms near Pierre

If you have a big gathering and need lots of room, The Lodge is worth considering. It's huge. The nine bedrooms can accommodate as many as 28 guests, and there are eight and a half bathrooms. Need a place for a family reunion,

team-building event or an upscale base for fishing or hunting? You've found it. Just northeast of Pierre, the waters of the Missouri River are nearby and easy to access. This rental is available via Vrbo.

Amenities

- Pool table
- Bluetooth sound system
- Patio
- Four king beds, 10 queen beds
- Fire pit
- Barbecue

Deep Snow near Terry Peak Ski Area

This is a stop for folks who love snow skiing, but it makes for a great summer stay, too, with plenty of hiking options. Terry Peak Ski Area is not even 1,000 feet away, so don't forget to pack your gear. There are no shortage of other options, either, with the history and casinos of Deadwood nearby and the entire Black Hills area as a possible playground. This rental is available through Airbnb.

Amenities

- Fully equipped kitchen
- Hot tub
- Wi-Fi
- Patio
- Grill



Log cabin in Vanocker Canyon



APRIL 5-7, 2024
PBR: Unleash the Beast
Denny Sanford
PREMIER Center
Sioux Falls, SD

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.

MARCH 30
BHEC Community Easter Egg Hunt
 10 a.m.
 Hermosa Baseball Fields
 Hermosa, SD

MARCH 31
Easter Sunday Sunrise Celebration
 7 a.m.
 Mount Rushmore National Monument
 Keystone, SD

APRIL 2
Clay-Union Electric Ribbon Cutting & Open House
 3 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.
 31321 SD Hwy. 19
 Vermillion, SD

APRIL 5
A Night at the Races fundraiser for Safe Place of Eastern SD
 6:30 p.m.
 Highland Conference Center
 Mitchell, SD

APRIL 5-7
71st Annual Hayes Play: Under a Cowboy Moon
 7 p.m.
 Hayes Community Hall
 Hayes, SD

APRIL 12-14
The Farmer's Daughter 19th Anniversary Celebration
 Hill City, SD

APRIL 13
Front Porch 605 Shop Hop
 9 a.m.
 Groton, SD

APRIL 14
Hill City Senior Sunday Breakfast
 8 a.m.
 Hill City Center
 Hill City, SD

APRIL 20
Healthy Kids Day
 10 a.m.
 Liberty Center YMCA
 Box Elder, SD

APRIL 20
Groton Firemen's Spring Social
 7 p.m.
 Groton Fire Station
 Groton, SD

APRIL 21
Fiddle & Popular Song
 2 p.m.
 Gayville Hall
 Gayville, SD

APRIL 26
Mitchell Technical College Alumni Cornhole Tournament
 6:30 p.m.
 World's Only Corn Palace
 Mitchell, SD

APRIL 27
66th Annual Lions Pancake Jamboree
 7 a.m.
 Masonic Hall
 Mitchell, SD

APRIL 27
Spaghetti Feed & Silent Auction for Black Hills Raptor Center
 4:30 p.m.
 Canyon Lake United Methodist Church
 Rapid City, SD

MAY 5
Opening Day
 Historic Prairie Village
 Madison, SD

MAY 11
Opening Day
 1880 Train
 Hill City, SD

MAY 18
Booth Day
 10 a.m.
 D.C. Booth Fish Hatchery
 Spearfish, SD

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