



# Cooperative Connections

**AgritourismSD seeks to attract visitors from far and near**

**Education and Entertainment on the Farm**

Pages 8-9

**College Students Deal with Change**

Pages 12-13



# Lacreek Electric Association, Inc. 2020 Annual Report



**Josh Fanning**

General Manager  
josh@lacreek.com

We would like to welcome our members to the 73rd Lacreek Electric's Annual Meeting. As always, our goal at Lacreek Electric Association Inc. is to serve our members as best we can in today's environmental/technology driven world, and to be able to provide our members with safe, affordable and reliable energy.

We feel strongly that our responsibility to the membership is to continually improve our community's energy infrastructure and implement new technologies as we strive to maximize the efficiency of our operation. Through the planning and foresight of your board of directors and management, a tremendous amount of hard work from your employees and the support of the members, Lacreek showed operating margins of \$371,710, non-operating margins of \$412,984 and G&T margins of \$425,179. In 2020, we retired \$671,809 in cooperative capital credits, \$81,313 in G&T capital credits and \$91,438 in estates.

The beginning of this month we mailed capital credit checks in the amount of \$994,333 for the years 1995, 1996 and 1997.

## The 2020 Construction Season

The year started with cleanup and retirement of the recently completed construction of the underground Wanblee East Circuit and 23 miles of aging overhead was removed. The Norris Sub was upgraded with electronic breakers and the Old Wanblee Sub and Longpine Subs were shut down but maintained for emergencies only.

In 2020 we built three single phase tie lines, one north of Oglala and two near Wanblee and these have become the normal source in those areas. A three phase tie line near Martin was built to back-feed the Weinmaster Sub service area.

Lacreek's infrastructure consists of 3,155 miles of overhead line and approximately 58,000 poles. In the last three years we have tested 13,750 poles. Testing has revealed 495 (4 percent) rotten or rejected poles in those three years. Heart rot, shell rot and fire damage are the three main reasons for a pole to be rejected. Pole testing also reveals an array of other maintenance issues from loose hardware to trees in the line which when fixed makes for a strong infrastructure.

Also being replaced was aging underground cable mostly in the Vetal and Niobrara service areas. This will continue in other service areas for years to come.

The Bennett County High School got a large auditorium addition which required a large service upgrade as well. The Todd County School System also is in the process of putting in a new grade school/middle school which required a substantial three phase service installation approximately a half mile southeast of Parmelee.

All of the afore-mentioned projects will add load and increase the reliability of our member owned system. Many thanks to the membership for their patience and support and the Lacreek employees for all their hard work.



**Clarence Allen**

LEA Board President

## Find Your Account #

A member's account number has been hidden somewhere in this newsletter. If you find your account number, call the office before May 5, 2021 and you will receive a \$120 credit on your next month's billing.

If no one finds their account number, the credit will be \$130 in the next issue.

# Lacreek Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-912)

**Board of Directors**

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

**Management Staff**

- Josh Fanning – General Manager
- Sherry Bakley – Work Order/Staff Assistant
- Tracie Hahn – Office Manager
- Anna Haynes – Finance Manager
- Mike Pisha – Operations Manager
- Stacey Robinson – Administrative/Member Service Assistant

**Office Personnel**

- Amy Pisha – Right of Way Specialist
- Kasi Harris – Accountant II
- Terri Gregg – Member Service/Billing Specialist
- Jessica Cook – Member Service/Billing Specialist
- Ashley Turgeon – Member Service/Billing Specialist
- Lisa Jensen – Member Service Representative

**Operations Personnel**

- Line Foreman: Jesse Byerley
- Journeyman Linemen:
  - Dane Claussen – Ryan Pettit
  - Aaron Risse – Lonny Lesmeister – Jordon Bakley – Garrett Metzinger – Tyler Brown
- Apprentice Linemen:
  - Kody Hagen – Brad Hahn – Trace Scott
- Journeyman Electrician: Roy Guptill
- Warehouse Man: Cody Larson
- 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: 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; telephone (605) 685-6581; fax (605) 685-6957

## Reprint of Official Notice

of Lacreek Electric Association's 73rd Annual Meeting Thursday, April 22, 2021  
Bennett County High School Auditorium, Martin, S.D

Dear Member,

Please plan to attend the 73rd annual meeting of members of Lacreek Electric Association, Inc. on Thursday, April 22, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. at the Bennett County High School Auditorium in Martin. **There will be no meal or prizes at this meeting.** Due to Covid-19 we ask that you stay the 6 feet away from others, face masks are optional. If you have been exposed to or may have the virus please stay home.

**The afternoon's events will include:**

Noon to 1 p.m. – Member Registration at Bennett County High School Auditorium

1 p.m. – The business meeting begins

During the meeting, four directors will be elected. The following candidates are running unopposed.

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

**Capital credit checks were mailed the beginning of April, so we will not be giving them out at the meeting.**

Respectively yours,  
Brent Ireland, Secretary

## 73rd Annual Meeting PROGRAM April 22, 2021 Agenda

Registration Begins.....	noon
Call to Order.....	1 p.m. Stacey Robinson, Administrative/Member Service
Invocation.....	Vice President Wade Risse
Determination of Quorum.....	President Clarence Allen
Reports	
■ Secretary.....	Brent Ireland
■ Proof of Mailing of Notice of Meeting	
■ Minutes of Previous Meeting	
■ Treasurer's Report.....	Troy Kuxhaus
■ Report of Election.....	Robert Schaub, Attorney

Old Business  
New Business  
Adjournment

Lacreek Electric Association, Annual Report 2020

## Remodeling? Keep Efficiency in Mind

Sunny days are prime time for tackling remodeling projects, upgrades and repairs around your home. If you're planning a project, make a point of adding energy efficiency features along the way. Here are a few ideas:

- Add insulation around recessed lights so heated or conditioned air doesn't leak out of them and the weather can't sneak in.
- Install programmable thermostats when you add rooms to the house. While you're at it, have the thermostats in the rest of your home upgraded to programmable models.
- Your contractor will install more insulation in any new spaces you're adding than your builder did during the original construction of your home. Consider adding insulation to already-insulated areas, like the crawlspace and attic, to meet new energy efficiency standards.
- A new kitchen means shiny new appliances. Select those rated as energy efficient by ENERGY STAR®, which use less energy than unrated models.
- If your older home still has single-pane windows, consider an upgrade. Double-pane windows are more energy efficient because they better shield your home from the outdoors - and keep your conditioned air indoors.
- Replace old lightbulbs in your most-used rooms with LEDs. They last 10 years or longer and save considerable energy when compared to incandescent bulbs.
- Work with a contractor who understands how passive solar design can affect your energy bills. Rooftop solar panels, sunrooms and skylights are popular additions.
- Add or upgrade ventilation fans in bathrooms. This can improve air quality throughout the home - not just in the bathrooms - by removing moisture from the air.
- Consider having a home energy audit conducted. Audits can help you evaluate your home for energy wasters, suggest ways to remedy inefficiencies and recommend additions that will make your house more comfortable and cheaper to heat and cool.



## Generate Safely.

Never use a portable generator indoors.

Do not plug generators into standard electrical outlets.

Use heavy-duty extension cords to connect appliances into the generator.

Start the generator before connecting appliances.

## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



### Don't Grill Too Close to the House

Mia Phillips, 5 years old

Mia is the granddaughter of Jim and Hans Moore of Rapid City. They are members of Black Hills Electric.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.



# A Craving for Casseroles

## Chicken and Rice

- 1 bag Success Brown Rice
- 1/2 cup ricotta cheese
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tbsp. chopped Italian parsley
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1/3 cup chopped onions
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 package (4 ounces) mushrooms, sliced
- 1/4 cup white wine
- 4 cups baby spinach leaves
- 2 cups shredded, cooked chicken breast
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper

Prepare rice according to package directions. In small bowl, combine ricotta, Parmesan and parsley; reserve. In large skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add onions and garlic; saute 2 minutes. Add mushrooms and wine to skillet. Continue cooking 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add spinach and chicken. Stir until spinach is wilted and chicken is heated through, about 2 minutes. Stir in rice, salt and pepper. Serve casserole topped with dollops of reserved cheese mixture.

SuccessRice.com

## Meat Lovers Pizza Casserole

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 can (15 oz) pizza sauce
- 8 oz. elbow macaroni, cooked and drained
- 2 c. (8 oz) shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 pkg (3 1/2 oz) sliced pepperoni, quartered
- 1/2 tsp. salt

In a large skillet, cook ground beef and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Stir in remaining ingredients. Transfer to a greased 2-quart baking dish. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes or until heated through. Yields 6 servings.

Gail Lee, Brookings

## Chicken Doritos Casserole

- 2 cups shredded cooked chicken
- 1 cup shredded cheese
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 can Ro-tel tomatoes, drained (canned tomatoes with jalapenos-mild)
- 1/2 packet taco seasoning (or more, to taste)
- 1 bag of regular nacho cheese Doritos

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except Doritos. In a greased 2 quart baking dish, put a layer of crushed Doritos (about 2 cups), then a layer of the chicken mixture. Top with more shredded cheese, cover, and bake 30-35 minutes until bubbling hot. Enjoy!

Alana Neville, Milesville, SD

## Garden Cafe Casserole

- 1 bag hash browns
- 1 onion
- 1 green pepper
- 1 box mushrooms
- 1 tomato
- 1/2 lb. deli turkey (cut in pieces)
- 1 lb. bacon (fried and cut in pieces)
- 2-3 cups cheese (Monterey Jack, Colby, Cheddar)

Place thawed hash browns in the bottom of a 9 x 13 pan. Saute onion, green pepper, and mushrooms. Place the meat and tomato on top of the potatoes. Then onion, green pepper and mushrooms. Top with cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

Joanna Gum, Clear Lake, SD

Please send your favorite dairy 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 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

# Lacreek Electric Awards Scholarships to Area Youth

Annually, Lacreek Electric awards scholarships to four first-year college or technical school students and one second-year college or technical school student. Applicants must be members or dependents of members of LEA and citizens of the United States. In addition, the applicants must carry a cumulative high school grade point average of 2.5 or higher and demonstrate scholastic achievement and community involvement.



Nicole Porch

The Lacreek Electric/Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship in the amount of \$2,500 was chosen by Basin Electric. This scholarship is awarded to one recipient who is entering their first year of continuing education. This year, the scholarship was awarded to Nicole Porch.

The Lacreek Electric Board of Directors Scholarship in the amount



Shawnee White

of \$2,000 was chosen by Basin Electric. This scholarship is awarded to one recipient who

is entering their first year of continuing education. This year, the scholarship was awarded to Shawnee White.



Thea Dubray

Two Lacreek Electric Association scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 were drawn from the remaining applicant pool by

the LEA board of directors. These scholarships are awarded to two recipients who are entering their



Rylee Rous

first year of continuing education. These scholarships were awarded to Thea Dubray and Rylee Rous.

One additional Lacreek Electric Association scholarship in the amount of \$1,500 was drawn from the applicant



Chloe Risse

pool from the previous year of non-scholarship recipients. This scholarship was awarded to Chloe Risse.

On behalf of the Lacreek Electric Board of Directors, General Manager, Staff and Employees, we want to congratulate the recipients of these awards.



**BUILT** by our community.  
**SHAPED** by our community.  
**LED** by our community.

**WE'RE PROUD TO  
POWER YOUR LIFE.**

# Cole Sonne's YouTube Channel Makes Farm Life Look Like a Visit to Disneyland

**Billy Gibson**

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Every day on the farm is a new adventure for Cole Sonne. While many 20-somethings contemplate leaving their family homesteads in search of a more urbane and sophisticated lifestyle, Sonne has no intention of giving up the farming life.

His enthusiasm for agriculture is in his blood and in his soul. But it's also all over the internet.

There is perhaps no more effective web-based advocate for South Dakota agriculture than Sonne, as evidenced by his audience of more than 145,000 YouTube subscribers. Sonne's 250 video posts have received over 26 million views since he created his YouTube channel two years ago.

After earning a degree in agronomy from South Dakota State University, Sonne returned to the family farm near Mount



Cole and his father Brian exchange some friendly sniping on the channel.

Vernon and it wasn't long before he had a notion to let the world see how fun and adventurous farming can be.

He saw that some ag-based channels created by young farmers such as Minnesota Millennial Farmer and Farm Life SD were growing in popularity, so he figured he'd take a shot at posting videos of all the wild and sometimes wacky situations that can emerge during a typical day.

"It's really informational and entertaining at the same time," said Sonne, a fourth



Fourth generation farmer Cole Sonne has amassed more than 145,000 YouTube subscribers.

generation farmer. "I think it's important to teach people who have never done this what farm life is really like.

The genesis of the channel came after he bought a drone and started taking aerial shots of raking hay and feeding cattle, but he didn't know what to do with the footage. He started posting his videos and then thought about capturing some of

the dialogue that takes place between him and his father, Brian, and other family members. The animals, machinery, chores and weather conditions never fail to create intriguing scenarios that keep fans tuned in.

Sonne was surprised when the viewer count started to skyrocket.

"It just took off right away," he said. "I call it ag advocacy. We just show people what we do from day to day and try to make it as fun as possible.

Much of the witty repartee is exchanged between Sonne and his often exasperated father. As Sonne had his camera rolling and capturing a farm task that wasn't going well recently, Brian grumbled, "To me this is embarrassing. To you it's good footage."

The conversation in that episode ran the gamut from Halle Berry to woodpeckers to classic Saturday Night Live skits as the

duo went from gathering hay to scraping manure. Sonne says the near constant laughing, joking and friendly sniping keep things light-hearted as they take care of their business.

Asked which of his videos has received the greatest amount of attention, Sonne is quick with his response.

"A video we did last April got more than one million hits," he said. "There was an approach to a field that was holding back water and we had to dig it out and release the water and put in a culvert. When we pulled the last grab of dirt that was holding a year's worth of water, the water just came gushing through. People seemed to really like seeing that large volume of water. A lot of what's going to get the attention is the thumbnail picture. If you can get the perfect thumbnail, people will click on it."

Apparently, the video titles also help to attract eyeballs. Some recent titles include: "Cole got splattered with poo," "Watch out - angry calf hits Brian and Jeff," "We saved him - moments from the end."

As for the time and dedication it takes to keep content fresh for thousands of eager viewers, Sonne said he considers it just another item on a lengthy list of tasks that every farmer has.

"It usually takes a couple of hours to get the videos done," he said. "I'll farm all day, come home and start editing and work til late at night. That's what most farmers do anyway. You have to balance things out."



The AgritourismSD program blends the state's top two economic drivers: agriculture and tourism. Photos provided by SD Tourism.

# AGRITOURISM

## New Program Blends South Dakota's Top Two Economic Drivers

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Amy Kruse already had a baby before she actually became a mother. That baby was proudly named Circle View Guest Ranch. That's the bed and breakfast establishment in Interior run by Amy and her husband, Philip.

"Before I had three kids, this was my baby," Kruse said on a recent Thursday afternoon while taking a break from getting the nearly 3,000-acre ranch spiffed up for weekend visitors and the busy travel season. "I got out of college and we got married and we came here 18 years ago. It's a lot of work to operate the ranch and make things run to give our guests a memorable experience, but it's worth it to see them enjoy themselves and have a great time in South Dakota."

While Kruse has long been engaged in her own form of what's called agritourism, she's an enthusiastic supporter of a new initiative designed to promote the accelerated growth of more agritourism enterprises across the state.

In 2017, the South Dakota Agritourism Work Group was formed to create an intensive program aimed at providing education, training and various support services to agribusiness owners interested in expanding their operations to include recreational, entertainment, educational, hospitality, cultural, on-farm sales and other activities for the general public. As tourism and agriculture are the two most significant business sectors in the state, organizers felt it only made sense to combine the two.

Spearheaded by South Dakota State University Extension and the state Office of Tourism, other local, state and federal agencies and entities joined in the effort. A partial list of participating organizations includes the Bed and Breakfast Innkeepers of South

Dakota, Experience Sioux Falls, Southeast Technical Institute, the South Dakota Specialty Producers Association, the South Dakota Value Added Ag Development Center and others.

According to Program Coordinator Stacy Hadrick of SDSU, AgritourismSD kicks off this month and consists of eight two-day, in-person workshops taking place over the course of 24 months where instructors provide the basic skills and tools that have been demonstrated to help increase the chances of success. The curriculum includes field visits to venues that already have a sustained track record of running thriving agritourism businesses.

The Circle View Guest Ranch, a member of West River Electric Association, is one of those venues. During the program's second year, the facility is slated to serve as a case study on how to launch and grow an agritourism operation and participants can have direct personal conversations with operators who will offer solid advice on every aspect of their business. Kruse said she looks forward to sharing some of the approaches and strategies that she and Philip have used to keep visitors coming to the ranch. The program, which kicks off this month, is designed to educate and train those associated with the ag industry on how to start, manage and operate an agritourism enterprise.

"This is such an excellent time to do something like this because things are opening up and people are ready to travel and escape the cities, get off the interstate and explore the back roads and see the tremendous beauty of our state," Kruse said. "They're craving an authentic experience after being shut down for so long."

Kruse added that she is eager to coach and encourage the group, but she also plans to shoot straight. That means giving the partici-



pants a healthy dose of unvarnished reality so they'll have a clear understanding of the commitment required.

"I think it's a wonderful program for our state. We're going to show them how we make things work with the overnight facilities and with the animals and their interactions with our guests," she said. "The business pretty much runs our lives for seven to eight months out of the year, and if you do it right it's all-consuming. But it's also extremely rewarding to see families have a terrific time bonding with each other, bonding with the natural landscape and the animals. It can be extremely rewarding for our guests and for our family as we're always making new friends. But you have to be committed."

Amy and her husband operate 12 guest rooms and three cabins with an average of 30 guests at any given time from April through September. She explained the cattle ranch and the bed-and-breakfast are separate businesses all set on 2,800 acres of land that includes prairie terrain in addition to Badlands formations, a river valley, rock beds, rolling hills, grazing pastures and tree groves.

For more effective statewide coordination, the AgritourismSD program organizers have developed a hub system, selecting the communities of Wall, Faulkton and Timber Lake to serve as regional organization centers. Participating business owners work through these hubs and meet six times over two years to share ideas and

discuss strategies for attracting visitors to their communities.

Robin Bickel is the hub coach for the Timber Lake area. A member of Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, Bickel runs a Red Angus cattle ranch in Firesteel that has been in the family for four generations. She said her interest in getting involved was to pursue potential economic growth not only for her ranch but for the entire area as well. She also sees agritourism as an incentive to both keep and attract young families to rural communities.

"If working ranches can find ways to expand and diversify their businesses, it may present opportunities for those young people who have left to come back to the family farm and be able to generate enough revenue to sustain multiple families on one place," she said.

Aside from the potential for added revenue, Bickel said she is eager to share with the rest of the world the wonders of rural life and the rural lifestyle she experiences each day.

"I think there's an increased interest people have about where their food and fiber come from, and we need to find a way to make that connection between the producer and consumer," she said. "We have such a rich history and so many natural resources to share. It's insane how many people can't see the sky full of stars at night where they live and can't see the prairie grass waving in the wind and



rolling across a hillside. There are people interested in things we take for granted. There are people in Nebraska that have a prairie chicken dance tour where people actually pay to see the chickens. I think there are many opportunities for our state if we commit ourselves and do it right."

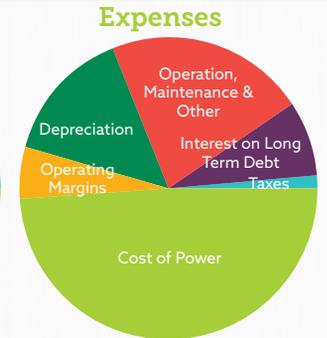
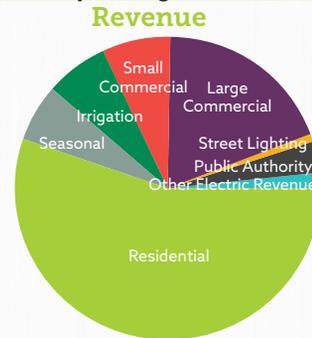
For more information on the program, contact Jacey Ellsworth, Industry Outreach and Development Representative, at 605-773-3301 or [Jacey.Ellsworth@TravelSouthDakota.com](mailto:Jacey.Ellsworth@TravelSouthDakota.com).

## Balance Sheet (as of December 2020)

ASSETS	2019	2020
<b>ELECTRIC PLANT:</b>		
In Service	\$66,172,739	\$70,522,953
Under Construction	\$3,570,935	\$1,000,493
Total Electric Plant	\$69,743,674	\$71,523,446
Less Accumulated Depreciation	\$(27,145,782)	\$(28,034,224)
<b>Electric Plant - Net</b>	<b>\$42,597,892</b>	<b>\$43,489,222</b>
<b>OTHER PROPERTY AND INVESTMENTS:</b>		
Investments in associated organizations	\$7,544,545	\$7,649,613
Other Investments	\$161,323	\$162,555
Special Funds	\$-	\$500,000
<b>Total Other Property and Investments</b>	<b>\$7,705,868</b>	<b>\$8,312,168</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS:</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$738,753	\$1,017,169
Temporary cash investments	\$914,404	\$1,350,150
Investment in equity securities	\$-	\$2,502,690
Account receivable, less allowance for uncollectible accounts	\$1,478,030	\$869,954
Material and Supplies	\$942,401	\$1,529,566
Prepayments	\$76,103	\$147,876
Interest receivable	\$7,571	\$4,438
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>\$4,157,262</b>	<b>\$7,421,843</b>
<b>Deferred Debits</b>	<b>\$289,233</b>	<b>\$1,189,307</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$54,750,255</b>	<b>\$60,412,540</b>
<b>EQUITIES &amp; LIABILITIES:</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>EQUITIES</b>		
Patronage capital	\$19,017,827	\$18,912,268
Other Equities	\$3,925,663	\$4,507,806
<b>Total Equities</b>	<b>\$22,943,490</b>	<b>\$23,420,074</b>
<b>LONG-TERM DEBT, Less CURRENT MATURITIES</b>	<b>\$28,285,646</b>	<b>\$32,171,932</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES:</b>		
Current maturities long-term debt	\$1,349,300	\$1,483,200
Accounts payable	\$870,661	\$824,491
Customer deposits	\$494,110	\$491,610
Taxes accrued	\$193,731	\$189,739
Other current liabilities	\$255,944	\$273,057
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$3,163,746</b>	<b>\$3,262,097</b>
<b>DEFERRED CREDITS</b>		
Members' energy payments	\$107,373	\$1,058,437
Electric revenue deferral	\$250,000	\$500,000
<b>Total Deferred Credits</b>	<b>\$357,373</b>	<b>\$1,558,437</b>
<b>TOTAL EQUITIES &amp; LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$54,750,255</b>	<b>\$60,412,540</b>

## Statement of Operations (Year Ending December 2020)

OPERATING REVENUES	2019	2020
Electric	\$14,283,954	\$14,197,245
Other	\$601,224	\$222,947
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>\$14,885,178</b>	<b>\$14,420,192</b>



OPERATING EXPENSES	2019	2020
Cost of Power	\$7,543,893	\$7,292,502
Transmission	\$64,732	\$81,741
Distribution - Operations	\$648,655	\$326,715
Distribution - Maintenance	\$819,311	\$891,759
Member Accounts	\$503,180	\$529,330
Member Service & Information	\$84,955	\$115,153
Administrative & General	\$1,223,649	\$1,250,228
Depreciation	\$1,990,087	\$2,173,369
Taxes	\$194,380	\$190,431
Interest on Long-term Debt	\$1,220,641	\$1,185,714
Other Deductions	\$8,447	\$11,540
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$14,301,930</b>	<b>\$14,048,482</b>
Operating Margin Before Capital Credits	\$583,248	\$371,710
Generation & Transmission Capital Credits	\$350,989	\$425,179
<b>NET OPERATING MARGIN</b>	<b>\$934,237</b>	<b>\$796,889</b>
<b>NON-OPERATING MARGIN</b>		
Merchandising, less costs & expenses	\$7,168	\$6,435
Gain on disposal of assets	\$23,810	\$40,735
Other Cooperative Capital Credits	\$63,742	\$51,431
Interest Income	\$376,151	\$314,383
<b>Total Non-Operating Margin</b>	<b>\$470,871</b>	<b>\$412,984</b>
<b>NET MARGIN</b>	<b>\$1,405,108</b>	<b>\$1,209,873</b>

## 2020 Year End Statistics

Year Energized.....	1948	Number of Active Meters .....	6,711	Kwh Sales.....	125,988,296
Plant .....	\$71,523,446	Average Monthly usage, Residence.....	1,295	Revenue per Kwh Residential ...	\$0.1112
Equity .....	38.77%	Number of Electric Heat Homes.....	926	Winter Demand.....	26,569
Service Area .....	5,174	Number of Irrigation Systems .....	123	Summer Demand .....	23,487
Total Miles of Line .....	3,163	Number Of Directors .....	13	Counties Served: Bennett, Jackson,	
Miles Transmission .....	204	Number of Members.....	4,283	Oglala Lakota, Todd and Mellette in	
Miles Distribution.....	2,653	Number of Employees.....	27	South Dakota and Cherry in Nebraska.	
Miles Underground .....	306	Number of Security Lights .....	3,777		
Meters per Miles.....	2.12				

# 72nd Annual Meeting of Members

## September 25, 2020

The 72nd Annual Meeting of the Members of Lacreek Electric Association, Incorporated, was held at the Bennett County High School Auditorium, the afternoon of September 25, 2020, beginning at 1:00 P.M. General Manager Josh Fanning asked for the members to rise for the National Anthem.

President Allen called the meeting to order and announced the Board of Director candidates; Zone 5-Jackson County, Jerry Sharp and Floyd Wilcox Jr. and running unopposed; Zone 1-City of Martin, Clarence Allen, Zone 6-Todd & Mellette County, Clifford Lafferty, Zone 9-West Oglala Lakota County, Cole Lange. He stated voting will cease in 5-minutes.

President Allen called upon Director Wade Risse who asked for a moment of silence for War Veterans, the late former board members Dean O'Neill and Melvin Cummings and then he gave the invocation. In addition, he stated due to COVID-19, Dean O'Neill and Melvin Cummings will be recognized at the 2021 Annual Meeting.

Director Risse announced Weston Ireland; last year's Washington D.C. trip winner and his video.

President Allen reported the determination of a quorum was met with 57-members registered at the start of the meeting; announced voting has ceased and directed the Judge and Tellers to begin counting the ballots with Lacreek's Attorney Robert Schaub overseeing the process.

President Allen called on Secretary Ireland who read the Proof of Mailing of Notice of the Annual Meeting.

Secretary Ireland asked if they could dispense with the reading of the minutes from the April 25th, 2019 Annual Meeting and referred to the minutes printed in the program. The members agreed, and upon motion duly made, seconded and carried, the 2019 minutes were approved.

Secretary Ireland called on Treasurer Kuxhaus for the treasurer's report.

Treasurer Kuxhaus gave an overview of the financial statement and advised the members that the actual full financial report is printed in the program. Treasurer Kuxhaus asked for a motion from the members to approve the treasurer's report. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the treasurer's report.

Treasurer Kuxhaus called on General Manager Fanning to give his report.

General Manager Fanning welcomed the membership to the meeting and asked the members to read his report printed in the

program. Due to COVID-19, he said he would not be introducing his staff and employees. He thanked the membership for the opportunity to serve as their General Manager and said he will continue to go above and beyond to maintain the operation of Lacreek Electric.

President Allen then explained the proposed 3 Bylaw changes that were printed in the program:

1. The 1st Bylaw change (Section 4 of Article IV) was regarding the Director Qualifications. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the Bylaw change.
2. The 2nd Bylaw change (Section 2 of Article VI) was about how long a director can serve as an officer of Lacreek. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the 2nd Bylaw change.
3. The 3rd Bylaw change (Section 2a of Article VII) was about Capital Credits. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the 3rd Bylaw change.

President Allen announced the 2020 "Youth Tour" Washington D.C. trip winner; Tyler Ring, son of Torey and Linda Ring. The Youth Tour trip was cancelled due to COVID-19; however, Tyler will be attending the trip in 2021.

Lacreek's Attorney Robert Schaub with the Law Firm Sundall, Schaub and Fox, P.C. advised President Allen of the election results which President Allen informed the members of the results: Zone 5-Jackson County, winner was Jerry Sharp and all remaining Directors ran unopposed; Zone 1-City of Martin, Clarence Allen, Zone 6-Todd & Mellette County, Clifford Lafferty, Zone 9-West Oglala Lakota County, Cole Lange. They will all serve a 3-year term.

President Allen asked for any old business. There was none.

President Allen again called upon Robert Schaub, Lacreek's Attorney who asked for a motion to approve the actions taken by the Board of Directors of the Association since the last Annual Meeting of the Members; with a motion made, seconded and carried to approve the Board's actions.

President Allen called for any new business. There was none.

President Allen thanked Todd Eliason with Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative for the power point presentation and Stuart Livermont for the sound system.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, upon motion duly made, seconded and carried, the meeting was adjourned.

# Rural POWER

## Leadership Program Aimed at Boosting Co-op Leadership

Intentional listening is a skill Billie Sutton has honed over the course of his adult life. And as he leaned into recent conversations with electric cooperative leaders across the state, the former legislator from Burke started noticing a trend.

He picked up on a common refrain: cooperatives are having a hard time finding qualified candidates to run for positions on their governing boards.

As not-for-profit organizations, electric cooperatives don't have pockets deep enough to dangle large compensation packages in front of potential board candidates. This reality tends to narrow the field of interested parties.

After hearing this a few too many times, Sutton decided to take action and do something about it. He began working to develop a leadership program through his non-profit Billie Sutton Leadership Institute to encourage and inspire rural co-op members to consider campaigning for a board position.

The new year-long leadership development program is called "Rural POWER: Powering Opportunities While Energizing Rural." It will be held alongside the third leadership class offered by the Institute. The first program in 2019 attracted more than 100 applicants to fill 12 spots. Last year's class drew roughly 70 applicants but was hampered by the impact of the pandemic.

Sutton surmised that the high interest level in the Institute's first two programs stems from a desire to return to a more community-focused style of leadership and steer away from a brand of politics that appears to be growing more openly hostile.

His supposition comes from the comments he heard not only during his six years serving in the state senate but also from voters during his gubernatorial campaign three years ago in which he received more than 167,000 votes while losing the race to Gov. Kristi Noem.



Billie Sutton and his wife, Kelsea (foreground) are shown with the Institute's inaugural class of rural leaders.

"I think people were excited about a new style of leadership I brought to the table that's focused on service, finding common ground, overcoming adversity and getting things done on behalf of the people. I think people are tired of politics as usual," he said.

For the Institute's inaugural class, applicants ranged in age from 18 to 60 and represented a plethora of professional backgrounds: health care, teaching, education administration, local elected officials, ranchers and more. Sutton said he hopes the new program will also attract interest from a diverse set of applicants.

Rural POWER will kick off this summer and is sponsored by the South Dakota Farmers Union. Participants will engage in educational leadership training opportunities emphasizing community building and

**Participants will engage in educational leadership training opportunities emphasizing community building and serving neighbors, while learning from cooperative leaders.**

serving neighbors, while learning from cooperative leaders who have demonstrated their commitment to rural development. They will gain the knowledge and enthusiasm to re-imagine and re-energize rural South Dakota, Sutton said.



Rural POWER aims to provide leadership training that will help re-invent and re-energize rural South Dakota.

The program has an advocate in Melissa Maher, general manager at Moreau-Grand Electric based in Timber Lake. Maher notes that while most of the state's electric co-ops qualify as "rural," that doesn't mean they are merely small-time mom-and-pop operations. For instance, Moreau-Grand Electric is a member-owned business with more than \$47 million in assets.

Maher said it's important that electric co-ops be run by managers and board members dedicated to the task at hand. Board directors are democratically elected by the members in their respective districts and charged with the responsibility of developing the policies that guide the future of the co-op. They also have certain legal, fiduciary and industry-related issues they must deal with during the course of carrying out their duties.

"These are positions of responsibility and leadership, and you need qualified people because they're making big decisions," Maher said, adding that serving on a co-op board requires considerable time and attention. "If someone is interested in being nominated, you have to be up front and honest about that fact. That's one of the first things people ask, and the honest answer is that it's a commitment."

Those who succeed in meeting their board responsibilities recognize and appreciate the fact they're contributing to the advancement of their entire service area by providing an essential commodity. Maher said it also takes a certain type of personality and temperament to be a successful board member.

"They have to learn protocol and there can be situations like dealing with personnel issues where they have to be discreet. They have to be the type of person who can agree to disagree and walk away and not let it get to them," Maher said. "They have to study up on the issues. We send out information a week ahead of time so that the board members can brush up on things and we can have a productive conversation. They need to care enough to be engaged and prepared."

Suzie Jones Pranger serves as executive director of the Institute. Today, Jones Pranger is an attorney living in rural Hartford, but she grew up on her family's farm in Burke and remembers her grandfather's involvement in her local co-op, Rosebud Electric.

"Even as a kid, I knew our power came from the local co-op, and I knew my family had a legacy of service to the co-op and our neighbors through my Grandpa's longtime position on the board," she said. "But what I never considered growing up is the need for subsequent generations to become active and continue to power our rural communities and our South Dakota way of life. Rural POWER will help build a pipeline of rural leaders ready to step up and take on leadership positions."

Kevin Mikkelsen, general manager of Rosebud Electric, is also supportive of the program and believes there is a lot of potential in the leadership program, especially when it comes to drawing some younger participants.

"I'm hoping the program sheds some light



on how cooperatives function and how they work on behalf of all the member-owners," he said. "All around the state, we really need to see some younger folks get involved and provide a new perspective and help us discover new and more effective ways to carry out our mission as co-ops, whether it's electric co-ops or ag-based co-ops."

Visit [suttonleadership.org/rural-power](http://suttonleadership.org/rural-power) to learn more about the program or to apply.

# Meet Your Cooperative Directors

## Zone 1 - City of Martin



Clarence Allen

**Clarence Allen** – Clarence was raised northeast of Long Valley, S.D. He came to Bennett County in 1972 and began farming and ranching. Clarence worked for Mueller Feeds and Pride Grain for 23 years while still farming and ranching. He retired from Pride Grain in June of 2012. Clarence still runs cattle

and helps others in the area. Clarence and his late wife Nancy, have four grown children. Clarence has served on Lacreek's board since 2014.

## Zone 8 - At Large



Wade Risse

**Wade Risse** – Wade graduated from Bennett County High School in 1986. In 1994, he married his wife Bonnie, and they have four children. He ranches and raises Angus cattle in the Risse Half Box V family ranch operation. He has served on the Bennett County Fair Board and St. Martin's Knights of

Columbus Council for a number of years. Wade has served on Lacreek's board since 2013.

## Zone 3- West Bennett



Troy Kuxhaus

**Troy Kuxhaus** – Troy has been a lifelong resident of Bennett County. He was born in 1969, graduated high school at Bennett County in 1987, graduated from Western Dakota Tech in 1989 as a Certified Welder. In 1990, he married Amie also a local resident and they have two children, (Keven and Colin).

They reside on the family farm west of Martin that he owns and operates. He is the third generation Kuxhaus to run the family farm. He served on the FSA board for nine years. He is a member of the Batesland Volunteer Fire Department. Hobbies include friends, and family ventures of hunting, fishing and vacations. Troy has served on Lacreek's board since 2013.

## Zone 1 - City of Martin



Scott Larson

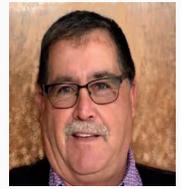
**Scott Larson** – Scott was born in Pierre, S.D., and raised in Martin, S.D. He graduated from Bennett County High School in 1987, attended Mitchell Vo-Tech, and in 1989, joined the United States Army. That same year, he married Carrie, also a Martin local, and they now have two grown sons.

After serving in the Gulf War, Scott focused his profession in the building trades and has owned his own residential

construction company since 1995. Scott also continued his education through the University of South Dakota. He has served as Martin City Foreman, Martin Code Enforcement Officer, and spent five years as city councilman. He also served as American Legion Post 240 Commander for four years. Over the years, Scott has coached American Legion baseball, flag football, AAU wrestling and was an assistant coach for high school wrestling. He enjoys his job, hunting and fishing, friends and family and loves life enough to smile infectiously. Scott has served on Lacreek's board since 2019.

## Zone 6 - Todd & Mellette County

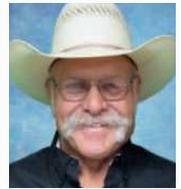
**Clifford Lafferty** – Clifford has been a lifelong resident of Todd County. He has been a rancher for the majority of his life. He and his wife Sherry have been married for over 40-years and have two grown children. Clifford currently serves on the Rosebud Sioux Tribal Council. Clifford has served on Lacreek's board since November 2019.



Clifford Lafferty

## Zone 9 - West Oglala Lakota County

**Cole Lange** – Cole has lived on his ranch in Oglala his whole life, which he has been running since the age of 18. He is also a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. He has served on the FSA Board in Martin and been a Shannon County Representative on the Stock Growers Board. Cole has served on Lacreek's board since June of 2020.



Cole Lange

## Zone 5 - Jackson County

**Jerry Sharp** – Jerry graduated from Kadoka High School and continued his education at Black Hills State University in Spearfish. He taught school for three years and then returned to ranch near Long Valley, S.D. Jerry is active in the South Dakota Rodeo Association, a member of R-Calf, a member of S.D. Stock Growers and a Director for the Western Jr. Livestock Show. Jerry has served on Lacreek's board since 1994.



Jerry Sharp

## Zone 4 - East Oglala Lakota County

**Connie Whirlwind Horse** – Connie attended school at Holy Rosary Mission (now Red Cloud) and then attended one year of college at Black Hills State. She and her late husband, Louis, ranched near Kyle for many years. She is the mother of nine children and



Connie Whirlwind Horse

continues to run the ranch. She has served on the Oglala Lakota County Commission and is the Treasurer for the Kyle Elderly Meals Program. Connie has served on Lacreek's board since 1994.

**Zone 5 - Jackson County**



Brent Ireland

**Neal Livermont** – Neal is the son of Butch and Judy Livermont. He grew up on, and continues to operate, the Livermont Ranch southeast of Interior. Neal is married to Dana and together they share four daughters. Neal

was a member of the band Country Rush for 20 years before retiring in 2014. He currently serves on the board of the Jackson County FSA, and the Oglala Lakota Livestock and Land Owner Association and the Interior Roping Club. Neal has served on Lacreek's board since 2016.

## Elected by You to Serve You

Clarence Allen , President	Zone 1	2020-2023
Wade Risse, Vice President	Zone 8	2019-2022
Brent Ireland, Secretary	Zone 2	2018-2021
Troy Kuxhaus, Treasurer	Zone 3	2019-2022
Scott Larson	Zone 1	2019-2022
Marion Schultz	Zone 4	2018-2021
Connie Whirlwind Horse	Zone 4	2019-2022
Jerry Sharp	Zone 5	2020-2023
Neal Livermont	Zone 5	2019-2022
Clifford Lafferty	Zone 6	2020-2023
Tom Schlack	Zone 7	2018-2021
Cole Lange	Zone 9	2020-2023
Donovan Young Man	Zone 9	2018-2021

# Four Lacreek Directors Seak Re-election

Members attending the 2021 Lacreek Electric Association annual meeting will elect directors to represent Zones 2, 4, 7 and 9 for three-year terms. The following individuals have filed petitions to run for these positions. The following are brief biographical profiles on each of the candidates who are running unopposed. 2803021308

**Zone 2 - East Bennett County**



Brent Ireland

**Brent Ireland** – Brent was raised in Martin and is a graduate of Bennett County High School. He earned a Mechanical Engineering degree from Brigham Young University. He spent nine years in the oil, gas and petrochemical industries (mostly in Texas) before returning to Martin to the farm/ranch he

grew up on. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Dakota Lakes Research Farm in Pierre since 2006. He and his wife, Tauna, have four children. Since returning to Martin he has been involved with area youth athletics (flag football, baseball, wrestling). He also coached wrestling at Bennett County High School for 14 years. Brent has served on Lacreek's board since 2015.

**Zone 4 - East Oglala Lakota County**

**Marion Schultz** – Marion graduated from Gordon High School and received a degree in Economics and Political Science at South



Marion Schultz

Dakota State University. He has ranched in the Batesland area all of his life. Marion has been on the Batesland Fire Department for more than 50 years. He has served on the County Committee for USDA since 2006 and has also served on the Bennett County Co-op board. Marion has served on Lacreek's board since 2000.

**Zone 7 - Cherry County**



Tom Schlack

**Tom Schlack** – Tom is a graduate of Bennett County High School and the University of South Dakota. Tom also worked for Lacreek Electric as a journey lineman for seven years. He has ranched in the Eli area since 1981. Tom has served on Lacreek's board since 1988.

**Zone 9 - West Oglala Lakota County**

**Donovan Young Man** – Donovan graduated from Pine Ridge High School and served on the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council from 1992-1996. He has worked for the Oglala Lakota County School District since 1981 and also raises cattle on his ranch east of Oglala.

Donovan has served on Lacreek's board since 1994 and the South Dakota Rural Electric Association Board of Directors since 2015.



Donovan Young Man

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

---

**April 22-May 2**

Beauty & the Beast, Sioux Empire Community Theatre, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-367-6000

---

**April 23-24**

Junkin' Market Days, W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Building, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-941-4958

---

**April 24**

Party for the Planet, Great Plains Zoo, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-367-7003

---

**April 30-May 2, May 6-8**

Radium Girls, Pierre Players Community Theatre, Pierre, SD  
605-224-7826

---

**May 8**

Davis Flea Market & Artisan Fair, Main Street, Davis, SD  
605-940-0069

---

**May 8**

Wells Fargo Cinco de Mayo Fiesta, Falls Park, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-271-0468

---

**May 8 NEW DATE**

Winefest Renaissance, Boys & Girls Club of Aberdeen Area, Aberdeen, SD  
605-225-8714

---

**May 9**

Mother's Day Tours, Historic Adams House & Days of '76 Museum, Deadwood, SD  
605-578-37241

---

**May 13**

Vermilion-Area Farmers Market - Plant Sale, High & Cherry Streets, Vermilion, SD  
605-659-3399



State Parks Open House & Free Fishing Weekend, May 21-23, 2021

---

**May 15**

Red Dirt Music Festival featuring Casey Donahew, Ian Munsick and Randy Burghardt Mountain Grand, Deadwood, SD  
605-559-0386

---

**May 21-23**

Annual Sound of Silence Tesla Rally, Downtown, Custer, SD  
605-673-2244

---

**May 21-23**

State Parks Open House & Free Fishing Weekend, All State Parks & Recreation Areas, SD  
605-773-3391

---

**May 22**

Frühlingsfest & Spring Market, Main Street, Rapid City, SD  
605-716-7979

---

**May 22**

La Framboise Island Bike Race, Steamboat Park, Pierre, SD  
605-224-7054

---

**May 31**

PPQG 25th Annual Quilt Show, Harding County REC Center, Buffalo, SD  
605-641-5591

---

**June 3-6**

Wheel Jam, South Dakota State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD  
605-353-7340

---

**June 4-5**

State BBQ Championships, South Dakota State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD  
605-353-7354

---

**June 4-6**

Black Hills Blues Stomp & Swamp Romp, Rush No More RV Resort & Campground, Sturgis, SD  
605-347-2916

---

**June 4-6**

Lake Andes Fish Days, City-wide, Lake Andes, SD  
605-487-7694

---

**June 5-6**

18th Annual Wessington Springs Foothills Rodeo, Wessington Springs Rodeo Grounds, Wessington Springs, SD  
605-770-5720

---

**June 5-6**

Siouxland Renaissance Festival, W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds, Sioux Falls, SD  
866-489-9241

---

**June 19**

South Dakota Cattlemen's Foundation Prime Time Gala, Denny Sanford PREMIER Center, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-945-2333

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.