

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Skiing for fun and health

Nordic skiers find
paradise on the snow
Pages 8-9

Car dealers adapt to
EV market
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Cross country skiing is a way
to keep moving and maintain
physical and mental health
during the winter months.

COOPERATIVE UPDATE

As of Dec. 2, 2021



Melissa Maher
Manager

Writing my last column for 2021 – I'm reminded how beautiful our fall weather has been. I'm a believer that for every good day – means one less bad day when it comes to the weather; the power of positive thinking!

We continue to move forward with our new headquarters facility plans. Upperdeck Architect will be finalizing the design development and providing construction documents within the first quarter of 2022. Included within this contract: architectural, site design, structural, mechanical, electrical, and civil engineering services required for the complex. The board has also approved the hiring of MAC Construction Co., Inc. from Rapid City as the Construction Manager at Risk, who will oversee construction of the entire project including bidding for the various components. If all goes according to plan – construction can begin by next spring with a 14-month time frame slated for completion.

Bids were submitted for a labor-only contract to relocate one mile of transmission line near Lantry due to a road move project announced

from the State of South Dakota. Also, bids were submitted for unit pricing (labor-only) to replace 300-400 rejected distribution poles discovered from testing performed this year. With the near 700 total rejects found during testing, our crews are not able to complete all the changeouts. Both projects were awarded to Keller Construction from Timber Lake at the November board meeting. There is a deadline for completion of these projects – so Keller will be working on site by the time you receive this newsletter. Trusting the weather holds out for this.

Other big projects slated for next year is replacement of the Dupree Substation transformer. A purchase order for such was completed in August of this year – for delivery by the last week in May of 2022. The purchase price alone for this transformer is \$224,000. The current transformer at Dupree will then be installed at the Isabel Substation. These transitions were determined by the four-year work plan completed by our engineers when considering growth along with age of existing plant.

As reported last month- be sure and note your capital credit retirement on your bill received in December. Total general retirement was \$500,000. I personally saw \$367.29 credit on my December bill – and was very appreciative for the credit during the holiday season!

Until next month... May the celebration of Jesus be the main focus of Christmas.

Comparative Report	Current (Oct. 2021)	1 year ago (Oct. 2020)	10 Years Ago (Oct. 2011)	% Change in 10 years
Number of Meters	7,066	7,016	6,548	8%
Kilowatt Hours Sold	6,682,281	7,470,626	5,561,420	20%
Cost of Purchased Power	\$444,127.66	\$526,370.51	\$363,133.70	22%
Overall Ave. Rate / kWh Per Member	0.1235	0.122	0.1051	18%

LOCATE YOUR ACCOUNT NUMBER

If you locate your account number anywhere in this issue of Moreau-Grand Electric's *Cooperative Connections*, you will be a winner. If you spot your account number and notify our office before the 10th of the next month, you will receive a **\$25 credit on your next bill!** For example: *1234



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

MOREAU-GRAND ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 018-951)

Manager: Melissa Maher

Editor: Roger Lawien,
Member Services & IT Director

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- Larry Hieb, President
- Kerry McLellan, Vice President
- Kelly Landis, Secretary-Treasurer
- Lois Bartlett
- Clint Clark
- Bob Keckler
- Paul Lawrence
- Ryan Maher
- Royce Walker
- Troy Wall

Attorney: John Burke

Management Staff:

- Kent Larson,
- Operations Superintendent
- Linda Dahlgren, Finance Officer
- Kyrie Lemburg, Accountant

MOREAU-GRAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, PO Box 8, 405 Ninth St., Timber Lake, SD 57656-0008, for the members of electric cooperatives across South Dakota. Families subscribe to Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better rural living.

Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Timber Lake, S.D., and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 8, Timber Lake, SD 57656; Phone (605) 865-3511; Fax (605) 865-3340; e-mail mge@mge.coop; Web site www.mge.coop. This institution is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Design assistance by SDREA

November 2021 Board Minutes & September 2021 Financial Information

The November 16, 2021, board of directors' meeting was held at the Timber Lake office with the following directors present: Bartlett, Clark, Hieb, Keckler, Landis, Lawrence, Maher, McLellan, Walker and Wall, and others present: Manager Maher, and Finance Officer Dahlgren (Delegated Recorder of Minutes).

The Large Power Users monthly report was given by Sue Sherwood, which included topics on large power usage and payments.

The Member Services report was given via video by Roger Lawien, which included SmartHub, Load Management, annual meeting statistics, Basin Regional Advertising meeting, Basin Scholarship information packets, budget, SDREA biennial Tech Conference and SDREA metering school, and site inspections.

The Operations report was given by Kent Larson, which included new service requests, K&H Electric on site for the road bores, Lantry road move update, Badger Park houses, participated in job shadowing program, SDREA Safety meeting to test grounds and hot sticks, reviewed SDREA Risk Audit report, discussed hot line work, sold old truck 13 to the City of Eagle Butte, discussion on well services and pole changes.

Manager Maher gave the Managers report that included the general capital credit retirement will be processed with the November billing cycle, Basin capital credit retirement, drug policies, bar coding update, transmission material, WAPA credit for 2022, BLC training scheduled for December 7-8, electric heat history, thank you notes, and wind projects.

The Board discussed and registered for the SDREA annual meeting scheduled for January 13-14, 2022, in Pierre.

Director Lawrence gave the Rushmore Board meeting report that included a financial report, renewable energy credits, load control report,

final approval of 2022 rates, budget and work plan, approval of the Revenue Deferral resolution, annual meeting scheduled for June 8, 2022, Manager report on safety, WAPA report, SDREA Legislative Committee, SDREA Line Patrol report, selection of audit firm, December board meeting, executive session, and member cooperative issues.

Director Lawrence gave the Rushmore Special Board meeting report that included the interview process for the General Manager position, Kory Hammerbeck was offered and accepted the position.

Director Walker gave the Basin annual meeting report that included the 60-year history of Basin, new CEO, keynote speaker from the Silicon Valley discussed how COVID sped up the digital world and cybercrime, potential sale of DGC, retrofit for hydrogen production, SPP report and Director Landis feels a company cannot be in business for 60 years by not doing things right.

Board approved the following: the agenda, the minutes from the October meeting, new members, refunds, line extensions, financial statistics, disbursements, safety report, outside consultant contracts for 2022, the 2022 preliminary budget, the bids submitted by Keller Construction for the transmission line move and for pole changes, Christmas bonus, Director Landis as the delegate and Director Bartlett as the alternate for the SDREA annual meeting, Work Order Inventories 956-976 in the amount of \$1,048,668.95, and building contract submitted by Upper Deck Architects Inc with Legal review and approval.

The next board meeting was scheduled for December 21, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. in the Timber Lake office.

SEPTEMBER 2021 FINANCIAL INFORMATION			
	Sept. '21	Sept. '20	YTD 2021
Operating Revenues	\$892,552	\$900,173	\$9,341,071
Cost of Power	\$429,177	\$376,232	\$4,565,139
Cost of Electric Service	\$858,825	\$795,295	\$8,939,804
Margins	\$83,905	\$150,872	\$482,687
kWh Purchased	6,824,346	6,537,121	79,360,126
kWh Sold	6,401,440	6,633,217	73,063,168

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

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

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

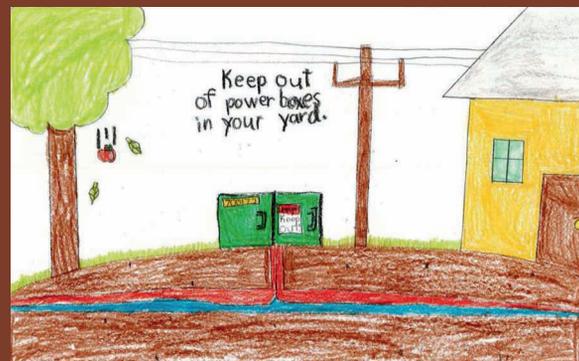
CO-OPS IN ACTION



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

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

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



Keep out of power boxes

Trinity Kurtenbach

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

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

SOUPS FOR THE SOUL

SMASHED POTATO SOUP

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

METHOD

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

Becki Hausser, Tripp

CREAMY CHICKEN GNOCCHI SOUP

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

METHOD

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

Tracey Burkett, Olivet

CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

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

METHOD

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

ifoodreal.com

Please send your favorite soup recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2022. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Do energy-saving measures in my home make a big difference?



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services
Group

For the average household, it depends on your home's efficiency and your habits. Your energy use is based on your home's equipment and how you use it. You might already have an efficient home and good energy use habits, or you might have room for improvement.

Energy keeps us comfortable in our homes, and our monthly bill is the associated cost for this energy use. To make energy-saving measures work in your home, it comes down to preventing energy waste while maintaining personal comfort in your home.

Let's take it back to the basics and see if we can find opportunities to save energy in your home. Filters, LEDs and thermostat settings are great places to start.

REPLACE FILTERS

If your home has a forced-air system, you have a filter. The filter needs to be checked regularly and replaced when it's dirty. A dirty filter can cause heating and air-conditioning systems to use 15 percent more energy, according to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Since heating and air conditioning make up almost half of your energy use, replacing your filter when it looks dirty is a habit that can reduce energy waste.

UPGRADE TO LEDs

Upgrading your lighting to LEDs is a simple, low-cost way to cut energy use. Depending on your budget, you can do it all at once or change bulbs out over time. If you are going to replace a few at a time, prioritize the lights you use the most.

There are many LED options available. One major variation is the color temperature, which is listed on the packaging in Kelvin.

I recommend 2700K because it is similar to incandescent lighting. I also suggest ENERGY STAR®-rated products because they meet strict quality and efficiency standards, use up to 90 percent less energy and last 15 times longer than standard bulbs.



ADJUST YOUR THERMOSTAT

It's amazing how much difference a few degrees can make. By adjusting your thermostat to your home habits, you can save year-round on heating and cooling costs.

For winter months, the DOE recommends setting your thermostat to 68 degrees when you are home and dialing it back 8 to 10 degrees when you leave the house or go to sleep. For summer, the recommendation is 78 degrees when you are home and 8 to 10 degrees warmer when you are away. Using a programmable or smart thermostat will allow you to set it according to your schedule.

Making these small changes in your routine will help improve your energy efficiency while maintaining comfort in your home.



Alex Cruz, Cheryl and Richard Skorupski, and Biana Garcia are shown at the El Corral restaurant in Clark.

Flyover County: Rick Skorupski spins tales of life in small town America

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

A place where folks wave with all five fingers.

A community where people actually listen to your response after asking how you're doing.

A home no closer than 10 miles to the nearest stop light.

Those were the requirements Rick Skorupski established when he decided he'd had enough of his native New Jersey and went looking for a more tranquil place to spend his retirement years. After conducting some extensive research, he and his wife Cheryl landed south of Frankfort nearly 20 years ago and have enjoyed the slower pace of life on their hobby farm in rural South Dakota.

While the Skorupskis have developed a wide social network and even recruited other family members to settle in Spink County, the acculturation process didn't go very smoothly at first. Turns out some folks in the community were convinced the Skorupskis were operating in a shroud of secrecy.

"They thought we were in the witness protection program," Rick recalls with a hearty chuckle. "Some of the neighbors offered to help us move our furniture in, and we declined, just trying not to be a bother. And then we'd make trips

back to New Jersey, so people started wondering what we were hiding."

But the suspicions didn't last long and the Skorupskis have been heavily involved in the local scene, participating in charitable projects, supporting civic events and contributing to the community in positive ways.

The Skorupskis' fondness for the people and culture of South Dakota is on full display in the six novels the two have published together with Rick as the writer and Cheryl the cover artist.

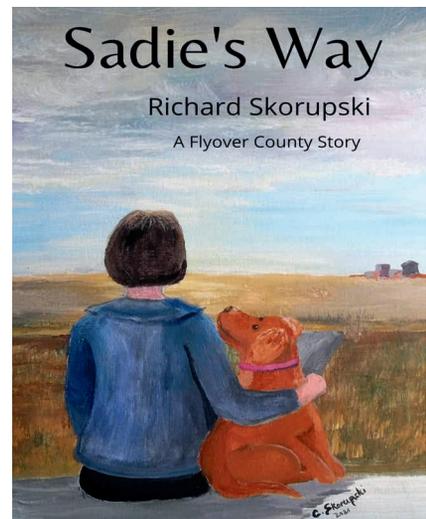
Rick, a member of Northern Electric and a U.S. Navy retiree, describes his self-published work as "nice stories about nice people." He got frustrated at all the anger, violence, sensationalism and negativity reflected in the media, so he decided to accentuate the positive aspects of life through his writing.

Inspired by those he befriended in his adopted home state, Skorupski produced a series of novels centered around an imaginary South Dakotan community called Helen (pop. 350 souls) located in fictitious Flyover County.

The plot lines involve local citizens, their shared hard-scrabble history as pioneers, settlers and sodbusters, and their interactions that take place in the tiny hamlet's schools, churches, diners, taverns and shops.

"I love my imaginary town and I feel I

know all the characters," Rick said. "I get up every morning and write what they tell me about their lives. Any time I have writer's block, it's because my imaginary friends stopped talking to me. But in the end, I hope my readers enjoy these stories as much as I enjoy writing them."



Skorupski was invited to participate in an exhibit at last year's South Dakota State Fair as part of the "Arts of the State Fair" program. During the event, he conversed with readers, discussed his characters, signed copies of his books and offered advice about his experience in self-publishing.

His books are sold through Amazon, and more information can be found by visiting www.flyovercounty.com.



FUN AND FITNESS ON THE SNOW

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

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

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

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

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

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

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

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

Immediate past president Josh Wangeman explains there are an

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Bear Mountain is situated 10 miles

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

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

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

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

Cross country skiing sites

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

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



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

improve your form.

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

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

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

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

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

THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE

Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative Returns More Than \$500,000 in Capital Credits to Members

Credit on My Bill? Yes, that is the Cooperative Difference!

Unlike other electric utilities, Moreau-Grand Electric exists to make sure your needs are always met, not to make a profit. As a member-owner, you share in the margins in the form of capital credit refunds. The cooperative works hard every day to keep your rates as low as possible, but it's sure nice to know that when there are credits, they go back to you.

How much has been returned to its members since the founding of the cooperative in 1946?

Including this year's capital credit refund, members have received over **\$9.5 million**.

How much is the 2021 capital credit refund?

The general retirement approved by the board will be

\$500,000 this year for members who earned capital credits in 1994 and 1995 plus a percentage will be applied to all current rate payers. This will be applied to your billing statement received in December. In addition to general retirement, estate capital credits paid out thus far through October is more than \$90,000. It is important to keep the cooperative informed of your current address so that we can send your refund when the board decides to authorize a general retirement to the cooperative's membership.

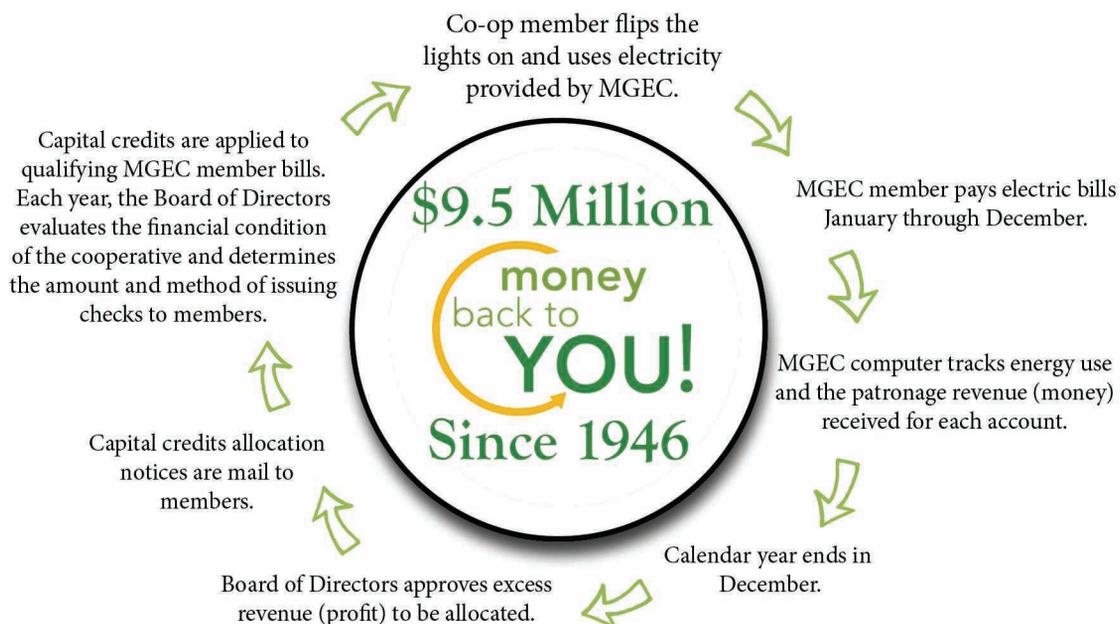
How is the amount given to each member decided?

These credits are based on the amount and cost of electricity each member purchased during the year or years being retired. *16825

Why aren't the allocations paid out all at one time?

One of the basic cooperative principles is that members participate in the financial well-being of the cooperative through their economic participation. Members are the owners of the cooperative and the cooperative uses payments received from members to build and maintain the reliability of the electric system. When finances permit, margins are periodically returned to the member.

How the Capital Credits Program Works



Watch For A Credit On Your Electric Bill

1000006623


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Public, John Q.
 27077 E 154th St
 Isabel, SD 57633



Serv Loc: 072-024-012		Serv Desc: HOUSE		Rate: Farm				
Meter	Type	From	To	Days	Prev Rdg	Pres Rdg	Usage	Multiplier
27424	KWH	10/31	11/30	30	50571	52787	2216	1
Period	Daily kWh	Daily Cost		Details of Electric Charges				
This Year	74	\$4.70		KWH Charges \$237.39				
Last Year	79	\$9.30		PCA Charge \$13.30				
				Sales Tax \$11.28				

Account Number	Page 1 of 2
Statement Date 11/30	Due Date 12/15

Billing Summary	
Balance From Last Billing	\$138.30
Payment Received 11/15/18	\$138.30 CR
Current Charges	\$264.97
Capital Credit Refund	\$120.97 CR
Amount Due	\$141.00

Your Capital Credit Refund will appear here.

MOREAU-GRAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Moreau-Grand Electric believes that by sponsoring youth programs we are investing in tomorrow's leaders. You can help by encouraging a future leader to apply. To be eligible, the student's parent or guardian must have an electric meter with Moreau-Grand Electric. *"Does not need to be a residence."* Applications are available at our offices in Timber Lake and Eagle Butte and with school guidance counselors. Applications are also available on the web at <https://www.mge.coop/scholarships>.

Director's Scholarship

Our board of directors are passionate about our youth they personally donate a portion of their compensation to a scholarship fund. This year, the scholarship will be awarded to an applicant planning to attend an approved regional line worker training program. The scholarship is in the amount of **\$2,500**. The deadline to apply for this opportunity is **Feb. 14, 2022**.

Basin/Moreau-Grand Scholarship

Each year, Moreau-Grand Electric offers a **\$1,000** scholarship to one area student, chosen by our power supplier Basin Electric Cooperative. The deadline to apply for this opportunity is **Feb. 14, 2022**.

Resource Conservation Speech Contest

Each year the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, Resource Conservation and Forestry Division sponsors a resource conservation-oriented speech contest. Any South Dakota student in grades 9-12 is eligible to enter. This includes public, private and home-school students. This opportunity is sponsored by the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives of South Dakota.

- First Place: **\$1,100** Scholarship
- Second Place: **\$750** Scholarship
- Third Place: **\$450** Scholarship

The deadline to apply for this opportunity is **March 26, 2022**.

S.D. Association of Cooperatives Scholarship Application

SDAC is awarding two **\$1,000** scholarships to second-year higher-education students who are pursuing a degree relative to the cooperative business, who are members or whose parents/guardians are members of a SDAC member cooperative, including Moreau-Grand Electric. Applications will be available mid-2022 with a fall deadline. See sdac.coop for details.

Please contact Roger at Moreau-Grand Electric at 1-800-952-3158 with any questions.



CAR DEALERS ADAPT TO EV MARKET

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

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

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

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

Will a reliable charging network be constructed?

Will EVs become more affordable?

Will drivers ever overcome their range anxiety?

Will the political winds change direction?

Tune in tomorrow. Same time. Same channel.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

standardized practices have yet to be developed.

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

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

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

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



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

Photo by Billy Gibson.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

Hot Beer
Lousy Food
Bad Service
Welcome

SHARING A PASSION FOR COMMUNITY THEATRE

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

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

Emily Costar

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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