



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**LACREEK ELECTRIC**  
JUNE 2023 VOL. 24 NO. 2

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## Building a Dream

South Dakota's  
Unique Getaway  
Pages 8-9

CPR & AED  
Training  
Pages 12-13

# February 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Lacreek Electric Association, Inc. was held in the office of the Cooperative, located in the Town of Martin, South Dakota, on Feb. 20, 2023, beginning at 1 p.m.

The meeting was then called to order by President Wade Risse and the following directors were present: Connie Whirlwind Horse, Jerry Sharp, Marion Schultz, Cole Lange, Clifford Lafferty, Troy Kuxhaus, Clarence Allen, Tom Schlack, and Scott Larson. Also present: General Manager Josh Fanning, Finance Manager Anna Haynes, Operations Manager Mike Pisha, Office Manager Tracie Hahn, Member Services/IT Jessica Cook, Administrative Assistant Ashley Turgeon, and Accountant Kasi Harris. Attending via Webex were director Donovan Young man and Work Order/Staff Assistant Sherry Bakley. Absent were Brent Ireland and Neal Livermont.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Wade Risse.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve Administrative Assistant Ashley Turgeon to record the board minutes.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the January 2023 Board Minutes.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the January Special Board Meeting Minutes.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the Operating Report for December that was presented by Finance Manager Anna Haynes.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the checks and disbursements for January, the checks ran from number 78427 to 78517 along with the electronic checks which ran

from 4188 to 4223 (Connie "chairman", Marion, and Neal). The February Check Audit Committee will be (Brent "chairman", Cole, and Clifford).

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the January Analysis of Investments that was presented by Finance Manager Anna Haynes.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the list of new members.

Mike reported on 2022 reject poles, substation maintenance, some underground maintenance, line patrol, and the Vetal substation outage; on equipment; and on some interviews for summer help. He announced that Henry Johnson started as the new Warehouseman on February 1st.

Mike gave the safety report.

Jessica reported on the upcoming Annual Meeting; registration gifts; a Smarthub table for consumers; planning for 400 meals.

A summary of the Basin Member-Only Webex the board attended is available.

Tom reported on the Rushmore Electric Board meeting he attended.

Josh reported that Derrick Larson with Eide Bailly will join us at our March Board meeting; that meter data management is almost complete; WAPA contracts; IJA funding; 2023-2024 work material is slow to arrive; School upgrades; that unclaimed capital credits can be used for donations with the board in agreement; and the board came to a consensus for no committee meeting in March.

Discussion was held on Capital Credits. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to pay out 100% of the year 2001 Lacreek's Capital Credits.

Discussion was held on the 2023 Member Write Offs with a motion being made, seconded, and

carried to approve the Write Offs.

Discussion was held on Co-op Day at the Capitol in Pierre, SD on February 21st with no one planning to attend.

Discussion was held on the Transportation-Equipment Committee's recommendations. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to purchase a 2023 Chevy Silverado with a utility box from Newcastle Motors.

Discussion was held on Cooperative Family Fund. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to table the topic until more information is available.

Discussion was held on the Rushmore Corporate Certificate and Financial Resolution. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to remove Derek Sorley and Anna Haynes and approve Josh Fanning and Kasi Harris to be added to the certificate.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to have Tom Schlack continue as Lacreek's director on the Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative Board.

Discussion was held on the NREA Voting Representative. The board chose Clifford Lafferty in December of 2022 as the voting delegate which is how it will remain for the year unless the proper form is filled out.

Discussion was held on NRECA CCD Workshop in Pierre, SD April 3rd-5th, 2023 with no one planning to attend as of now. All courses are also offered online through NRECA.

Other information included 2022 year-to-date statistics and a report from Line Patrol, Inc.

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

Next Board Meeting – March 21, 2023, at 1 p.m.

# March 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Lacreek Electric Association, Inc. was held in the office of the Cooperative, located in the Town of Martin, South Dakota, on March 21, 2023, beginning at 1 p.m.

The meeting was then called to order by President Wade Risse and the following directors were present: Donovan Young Man, Connie Whirlwind Horse, Jerry Sharp, Marion Schultz, Cole Lange, Clifford Lafferty, Troy Kuxhaus, Clarence Allen, Tom Schlack, Scott Larson, and Brent Ireland. Also present were General Manager Josh Fanning, Finance Manager Anna Haynes, Operations Manager Mike Pisha, Office Manager Tracie Hahn, Work Order/Staff Assistant Sherry Bakley, Administrative Assistant Ashley Turgeon, Accountant Kasi Harris, and Derrick Larson with Eide Bailly. Attending via Webex were director Neal Livermont and Member Service/IT Jessica Cook.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Wade Risse.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve Administrative Assistant Ashley Turgeon to record the board minutes.

Derrick Larson with Eide Bailly gave the Annual Audit Report to the board. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the Annual

Audit report.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the February 2023 Board Minutes with the following corrections:

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the January 2023 Special Board Meeting Minutes.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the Operating Report for December 2022 that was presented by Finance Manager Anna Haynes.

There were no additions to the agenda.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the Operating Report for January that was presented by Finance Manager Anna Haynes.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the checks and disbursements for February checks ran from number 78518 to 78593 along with the electronic checks which ran from 4224 to 4266 (Brent "chairman", Cole, and Clifford). The March Check Audit Committee will be (Troy "chairman", Clarence, and Donovan).

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the February Analysis of Investments that was presented by Finance Manager Anna Haynes.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to

approve the list of new members.

Jessica gave an update on the upcoming Annual Meeting.

Mike reported on the Manderson 3-phase feeder replacement; 2023 cable replacement and reinsulate areas; Contractors hired for 2023; recently iced overhead lines and line patrol; work equipment; and hiring five men for summer help.

Mike gave the safety report.

Tom reported on the Rushmore Electric Board meeting he attended.

Brent reported on the NRECA PowerXchange Meeting he attended.

Josh reported about Cody, Kasi, and Anna switching offices; on the 5 new linemen starting soon; was able to get a tester for breakers from Wheat Stone to continue breaker maintenance; updating WAPA contracts; and that #9 Chevy pick-up replacement should be here next week.

Other information included a thank you note from the Fanning family and a thank you note from Central Electric for supporting the Charity Ride Bowling Tournament.

No further business was brought before the board and the meeting was adjourned. Next Board Meeting – April 18, 2023, at 1 p.m.



**COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS**

**LACREEK ELECTRIC**

(USPS No. 018-912)

**Board of Directors**

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

**Management Staff**

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

**Office Personnel**

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

**Operations Personnel**

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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South Dakota Rural Electric – – – –  
**YOUTH EXCURSION**  
 – – – – July 24-27, 2023



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

All area high school freshmen, sophomores and juniors whose parents or guardians are members of Lacreek Electric are eligible to apply.

**For More Information Contact:**

Lacreek Electric Association - Jessica Cook  
 121 N. Harold St.  
 Martin, SD 57551  
 jessica@lacreek.com

**Application Deadline:**  
 June 1st, 2023

\*[Insert Co-op Name Here] will provide for transportation, lodging, meals, entertainment and sightseeing events. Students are required to supply their own personal/shopping money.

**Find Your Account Number: It's Worth \$30!**

A member's account number has been hidden somewhere in this newsletter. If you find your account number, call the office before **June 9, 2023**, and you will receive a \$30 credit on your next month's billing. If no one finds their account number, the credit will be \$40 in the next issue.

# Home Electrical Safety Tips

Electricity always seeks the easiest path to the ground. It tries to find a conductor, such as metal, wet wood, water – or your body! Your body is 70% water, so if you touch an energized bare wire or faulty equipment while you are grounded, electricity will instantly pass through you to the ground, causing a harmful – or fatal – shock.

The amount of electricity used by one 7.5 watt Christmas tree bulb can kill you if it passes through your chest. Even if it isn't fatal, electrical shock can easily cause serious falls, burns, or internal bleeding.

Your Home Wiring is just a number of loops, or circuits. A “live” wire brings current to a light or an outlet. A “neutral” wire returns current to its source. Between inside wiring and outside power lines is a service panel.

Most service panels have a main switch. Use it to cut all power when changing a fuse or in case of fire or shock. If you don't have a main switch, turn off all circuit breakers. Don't tamper with your electric meter. You'll risk shock, explosion, or fire.

Your service panel contains fuses or circuit breakers which interrupt power to specific circuits in case of a short circuit or overload. If this happens:

- Unplug appliances.
- Switch off power at the main switch.
- Try to determine the cause of the problem and correct it if possible.
- Replace the fuse that has a broken metal strip with a new fuse of the same rating – typically 15 amperes.
- If you have circuit breakers instead, switch the one that's “off” to “on.”
- Restore power.

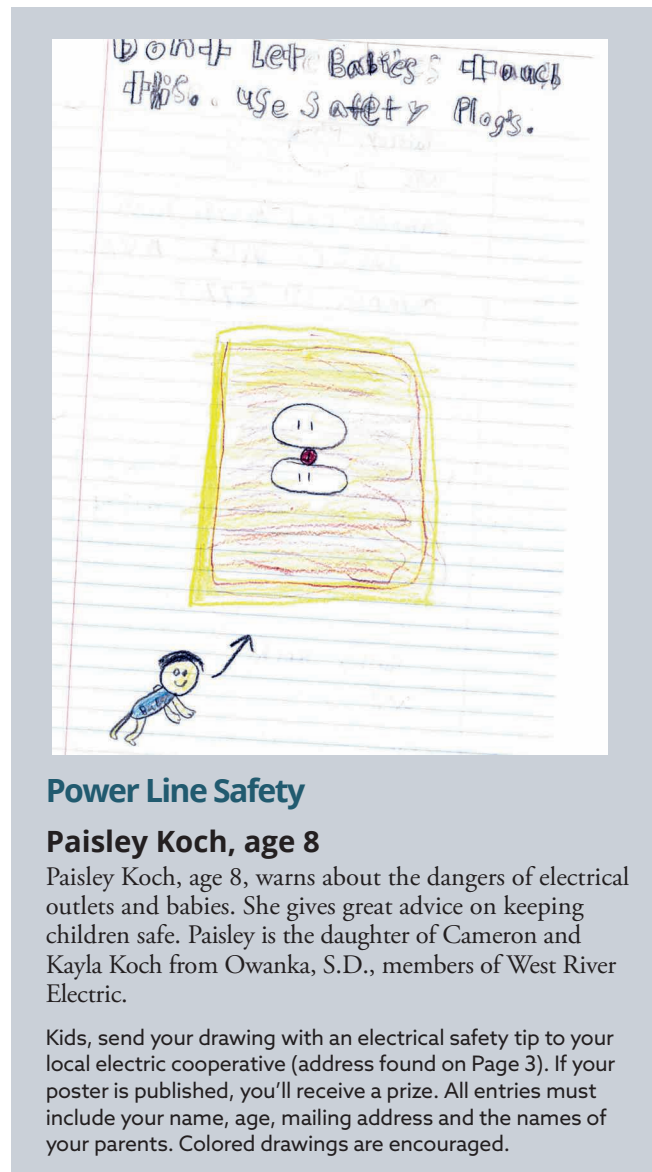
Never use anything other than a fuse to replace a fuse – you could cause a fire. If fuses blow or a circuit breaker trips often, contact a qualified repairman.

## Grounding: The Third Prong

When you use a plug with three prongs, the third prong connects inside the outlet with a “ground wire,” which usually connects to a water pipe or a ground rod at the service panel. As a result, in case of a short circuit, electricity should flow through the grounding system instead of through you. Never remove the third prong.

## Appliance Safety

Remember the most important rule for appliances – electricity and water don't mix. Keep appliances, especially hair dryers, away from bathtubs, puddles, sinks and wet hands. Wet skin increases the risk of shock, so unplug an appliance before cleaning – even if off, it can shock. Never put metal objects in live parts of appliances or in outlets. If an appliance overheats, unplug it and have it checked. Don't overload outlets. Use only appliances that are approved by a nationally recognized testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories.



## Power Line Safety

### Paisley Koch, age 8

Paisley Koch, age 8, warns about the dangers of electrical outlets and babies. She gives great advice on keeping children safe. Paisley is the daughter of Cameron and Kayla Koch from Owanka, S.D., members of West River 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.



# DAIRY DESSERTS

## RHUBARB STRAWBERRY CHEESECAKE

Ingredients:

- Rhubarb Sauce
- 2 1/2 cups thinly sliced fresh rhubarb
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 2 tbsps. orange juice
- Crust
- 2 cups finely crushed oreo cookies, (about 18 cookies)
- 1/3 cup butter, melted
- Filling
- 9 oz. white baking chocolate
- 3 packages (8 oz. each) cream cheese, softened
- 1 container (7 oz.) sour cream, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tbsps. cornstarch
- 2 tpsps. pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 3 extra large eggs
- Topping
- 1 pint strawberries, remove tops
- 1/4 cup strawberry jelly
- 2 tbsps. water
- Prepared whipped cream

**METHOD**

Preheat oven to 350°F. For the Rhubarb Sauce, mix rhubarb, sugar and orange juice in a medium saucepan. Bring just to boil and reduce heat. Cook about 5 minutes or until rhubarb is tender, stirring occasionally. Set aside to cool. For the Crust, mix cookie crumbs and butter in a medium bowl. Press mixture evenly into bottom of 10-inch springform pan sprayed with no stick cooking spray. Set aside. For the Filling, melt chocolate according to package directions and set aside. Beat cream cheese, sour cream, sugar, cornstarch, vanilla and salt on medium-high until well blended (about 5 minutes). Add eggs, 1 at a time, mixing on low speed after each addition just until blended. Gradually beat in chocolate. Add cooled Rhubarb Sauce to the filling mixture, stirring gently to incorporate. Pour Filling mixture over cookie crust. Bake 1 1/2 to 2 hours or until edge of cheesecake is firm and center is almost set. Allow to cool 30 minutes. Refrigerate 4 hours or overnight. When cheesecake is completely cooled, place strawberries on top cut side down. Mix strawberry jelly and water in a small bowl. Brush over strawberries. Pipe whipped cream border around the cheesecake before serving.

[mccormick.com](http://mccormick.com)

## NO-CHURN BLACK FOREST RIPPLE ICE CREAM

Ingredients:

- 12 oz. Pitted cherries (fresh or frozen) thawed, halved
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 cups very cold heavy cream
- 1 14 oz. can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 4 oz. bittersweet choc. chunks

**METHOD**

Place the cherries, sugar and 2 tbsps. water in a large sauce pan. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, stirring often, until the cherries break down and the liquid turns to a thick syrup, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and refrigerate until cool, about 15 minutes. Using an electric mixer, beat the cream, condensed milk and vanilla in a large bowl on medium/high until stiff peaks form, 3 to 4 minutes. Gently fold in the choc. chunks. Spoon half the cream mixture into a 4 1/2 x 8 1/2 loaf pan or 1 1/2 qt. freezer safe container. Spoon half the cherry mixture on top. Using a knife, swirl the cherry mixture through the cream. Repeat with the remaining cream and cherry mixture. Cover with plastic wrap and freeze until set. Keep frozen for up to 2 weeks.

Sue Hove  
Sioux Falls, S.D.

## SWEDISH CREME

Ingredients:

- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 cup plus 2 tpsps. sugar, divided
- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- 1 tsp. almond extract
- 1 tsp. clear imitation vanilla extract
- 2 cups sour cream
- 1 cup fresh or frozen red raspberries

**METHOD**

1. In a saucepan, combine cream and 1 cup sugar. Cook and stir constantly over low heat until candy thermometer reads 160 degrees, or steam rises from pan. (Do not boil). Stir in gelatin until dissolved; add extracts. Cool 10 minutes.
2. Whisk in sour cream. Pour into eight dessert glasses or small bowls. Chill at least 1 hour.
3. Before serving, combine raspberries and remaining sugar; spoon over each serving.

Joanne Singrey-Johnson  
Watertown, S.D.

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

# Efficiency Tips for Residential Well Pumps

**Q:** I get my water supply from my own well. How can I use less electricity with my well?

**A:** The energy a residential well system uses depends on the equipment and water use. The homeowner is responsible for maintaining the well, ensuring drinking water is safe and paying for the electricity needed to run the well pump. Here are steps to improve and maintain your residential well and use less electricity.

## Get Your Well System Inspected

If you're concerned about how much you pay to pump water from your well, start with an inspection.

Similar to heating and cooling systems, well pumps are put to work daily, and parts will wear over time. Regular maintenance can improve efficiency and increase the lifespan of the system.

The proper system design and sizing can save energy. Oversizing equipment can waste energy. Ask a professional if your well equipment is properly sized for your needs. In some cases, adding a variable-speed drive can save energy. Keep in mind, well systems don't last forever. Consider design and sizing before the existing system fails.

Things can go wrong with your well that are hard to spot. The water system may even act normally with good water pressure and flow while using more energy and causing higher bills.

One of the most common causes of increased energy use is underground water line leakage between the pump and the home. Water lines can freeze and break or be damaged by digging or a vehicle driving over underground lines. Other issues can include waterlogged pressure tanks and malfunctioning equipment. Even if your well is in good working order, there are practices you can implement to save on your electric bill.



**Miranda Boutelle**  
Efficiency Services  
Group

## Save Money by Lowering Your Water Use

The less water you use, the less energy you use. Here's how you can conserve water and electricity with your home appliances:

**Toilets.** Check your toilet for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank. If the color appears in the bowl without flushing, your toilet has a leak. This is likely caused by a worn flapper, which is an inexpensive and easy do-it-yourself fix.

If your toilets were installed before 1994, they are likely using more than 4 gallons per flush, which is well above new energy standards of 1.6 gallons. The average family can save nearly 13,000 gallons per year by replacing old, inefficient toilets with WaterSense-labeled models.

Another option is the tried-and-true plastic bottle method. Place sand or pebbles into a one- or two-liter bottle and place it in your toilet tank or buy toilet tank bags. This results in less water filling the tank and less water being flushed.

**Dishwasher.** If you wash dishes by hand, start using your dishwasher instead. Did you know new ENERGY STAR®-certified dishwashers use less than half the energy it takes to wash dishes by hand? According to the Department of Energy, this simple change in habit can save more than 8,000 gallons of water each year.

**Washing machine.** Run your machine only with full loads to save water and energy. You may also consider upgrading to an ENERGY STAR®-certified washing machine, which uses about 20% less energy and about 30% less water than regular washers.

**Showerheads and faucets.** Get leaky showerheads and faucets fixed. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, a leaky faucet that drips at the rate of one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons of water per year.

Faucet and shower aerators are inexpensive devices that reduce the amount of water flow. For maximum water efficiency, look for faucet aerators with no more than 1 gallon per minute flow rates and low-flow showerhead flow rates of less than 2 GPM.

Understanding proper well system design, maintenance and water conservation will help you save.

# South Dakota Legislators Learn About Electricity

Scott Waltman

Most folks don't realize all the work it takes to make sure the bulb comes on when they flip the switch to light a room or open the refrigerator door for a midnight snack.

Often, those people include South Dakota legislators.

That's by the South Dakota Rural Electric Association organizes tours for state lawmakers every other summer.

The two-day tours start at Basin Electric Power Cooperative in Bismarck, N.D., then head west to Antelope Valley Station near Beulah, N.D., before dipping into South Dakota for stops at East River Electric Power Cooperative in Madison and Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative in Rapid City.

"It pays big dividends," said Dick Johnson, CEO and general manager of West River Electric Association in Wall.

First, it serves as an educational tool, said Chris Studer, chief member and public relations officer for East River Electric in Madison.

It gives lawmakers insight into the industry and how coal is converted into energy that makes its way to homes and businesses in the South Dakota Rural Electric footprint.

Not many people realize how complex it is to provide affordable, reliable electricity, Johnson said.

Simply put, Studer said, East River Electric and Rushmore Electric buy power from Basin Electric. Then East River and Rushmore distribute that electricity to local cooperatives.

At Basin Electric headquarters, the tour starts with an overview discussion about how local distribution cooperatives provide power across the region, Studer said.

From there, the group heads west to Antelope Valley Station where legislators get a tour of the power plant.

Antelope Valley, which was built in the

mid-1980s, is considered what's called a "mine-mouth" facility. The coal plant is built right next to a lignite coal mine. The coal is mined, then sent to the neighboring Dakota Gasification Co.

Dakota Gasification, which is a subsidiary of Basin Electric, owns Great Plains Synfuels Plant, which uses the coal to create natural gas and other products.

Particles of coal that are too small to be used in the gasification process are used to power Antelope Valley Station.

Having the Antelope Valley plant and Dakota Gasification so close to a coal mine decreases transportation costs, Studer said.

The plant is 13 stories high, and guests are taken to the top so they can look into the boiler and grasp just how big the operation is, he said.

Johnson said those on the tour can look out and see not only the coal mine, but the land that has been reclaimed, or restored, after it has been mined.

The land has to be restored to how it looked and was composed prior to mining, Johnson and Studer said. That includes trees, native grasses, waterways, wildlife and the same type of dirt.

Completing that process takes perhaps 10 years, Studer said, but once reclamation is finished, the land is again ready for farming and other uses.

Legislators are taken into the mine to see the size of the trucks, lines and other equipment used in the process, Studer said. They also get a feel for the transition system that sends out power to the Dakotas and beyond.

The tours also go by wind power plants, providing an opportunity to offer insight on how they work, Studer said.

The other big benefit of the tours for the



electric cooperatives is making connections with state lawmakers, Johnson said.

Once they understand how energy is manufactured and distributed, it's easier to visit with legislators about important issues, Johnson said. The tours offer a chance to have personal discussions and network. Then, the two sides know each other if they need to visit in Pierre during the legislative session or elsewhere, he said.

Studer agrees.

State lawmakers make big decisions on transmission lines and other energy-related issues that are important to not only power cooperatives, but customers, he said. The rural electricians want them to have the background to understand how the entire system works and why a particular issue might be vital. Having relationships in place is important to that process, Studer said.

The South Dakota Rural Electric Association is very fortunate to benefit from Basin Electric's generosity in allowing the tours, Johnson said. Feedback from legislators has been extremely positive, he added.

Generally, Studer said, between 10 and 15 legislators who haven't been on the tour before attend every other year.

The next tour will be this summer, though the dates have yet to be set. Studer said there are no tours during election years because legislative candidates tend to be busy campaigning and attending events to garner support from voters.

Dates for this year's event will be selected depending on what works best for the legislators invited, Studer said.

Yes, when the switch is flipped, the light comes on. But the tours help lawmakers understand it's not that simple.





# BUILDING A DREAM

J. Dylan Moro and his cousin, Knut Finnevolden, stand outside Moro's family-built treehouse yurt.

## Moros' Treehouse Yurt Offers Unique Dakota Getaway

**Frank Turner**

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

From the vast, open prairies of the east to the towering Black Hills in the west, South Dakota's diverse landscape presents a breathtaking tapestry of natural beauty for camping enthusiasts to explore. With 13 state parks, six national parks, and numerous recreation areas at their disposal, visitors and residents alike are always within arm's reach of a world-class camping experience, complete with the guarantee of an unforgettable sunset.

The allure of South Dakota's outdoors extends well beyond aesthetics. Outdoor enthusiasts can also find a plethora of adventure by rock climbing the steep quartzite cliffs of Palisades State Park or catching a glimpse of a wild buffalo or bighorn sheep in Custer State Park.

Given the abundance of breathtaking

locations, it comes as no surprise that many enthusiasts desire a camping experience that matches the splendor of their natural surroundings. Simply put, sometimes a basic tent just doesn't suffice. Campers have embraced a variety of specialty camping styles, such as staying in treehouses and fully furnished cabins. With options ranging from off-grid yurts to glamping tents outfitted with complimentary Wi-Fi, these innovative accommodations elevate the traditional outdoor experience, catering to each individual's preference, comfort, and style.

J. Dylan Moro and his wife, Keena Byrd-Moro, both residents of Spearfish,



Moro's treehouse yurt is fully furnished, complete with tables, couches and a wood stove.



S.D., erected one such location on the outskirts of Lead, S.D., with the help of their family and neighbors in 2015. After both serving in the military as Army Reserve Nurses, Dylan and Keena saved up enough money to purchase a lot of land and realize their dream of building a treehouse yurt in the Black Hills.

“It was always my dream to build up there,” said Dylan. “We wanted to create an experience where people could escape and reconnect with nature.”

Their dream became a reality thanks to the amazing effort put forward by their family, friends and neighbors. More than 10 individuals contributed to the project, assembling the yurt in just two days despite a snow storm during the construction process.

“I remember being so close to finishing the project in one day,” he recalled. “Despite the snow, I could see the finish line and wanted to keep going, but the conditions were getting slippery. For safety, my wife convinced us to wait, and she was right, of course.”

Even Keena’s late father, who had Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s during

the project, assisted how he could by peeling logs and building railings for the treehouse yurt. Dylan shared that having Keena’s father as part of the project made the experience even more special for their family. The structure now stands as a testament to his memory and provides a connection with their family’s past.

“He loved being up there and part of the project,” he shared. “I can honestly say that we built this structure by hand without any machinery. We relied on the many hands of our friends and family to get the job done.”

When the family finished, the end result was a rustic treehouse yurt perched between two pine trees on a mountain slope, overlooking the Mickelson Trail. Today, the Moros’ treehouse yurt guarantees a remote escape, free from nearby tents or campers. And while it’s only accessible by dirt road, the location still offers easy access to some major attractions of the Black Hills, including Deer Mountain Ski Resort and Pathways Spiritual Sanctuary.

“It’s a really cool spot, and for me, I love having access to the trail for easy

biking and running,” said Dylan. “And it’s not unusual to catch a glimpse of an ongoing bike race or marathon on the Mickelson Trail from the deck of the yurt.”

Listed on Airbnb, the location has garnered over 241 reviews and 4.83 stars from campers from all over the United States, featuring two beds, a wood stove, and an indoor fireplace. Even still, the getaway location isn’t for the faint of heart. With no running water or onsite electricity, campers must rely on the yurt’s amenities, which cater to campers seeking a balance of comfort and authenticity in their outdoor experience.

“Part of the beauty of the yurt is that it’s totally off-grid, but people need to know what they are getting into,” he said. “But that shouldn’t scare anyone away. We have hosted people from all walks of life: people who have never camped before, people who are driving across the country and want a unique stay, and even locals who just want to get away. Everyone finds something here that they enjoy.”



Perched between two trees, the Moro family yurt provides a unique getaway location for visitors to the Black Hills of South Dakota.

# Lacreek Electric Scholarship Winners

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.

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 **Reece Ohrtman**.



The Rushmore/Lacreek Electric Board of Directors Scholarship in the amount 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 **Ellen McDonnell**. 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 first year of continuing



education. These scholarships were awarded to **Megan Begeman** and **Felicity Keegan**.



In 2021 the employees of Lacreek Electric got together and decided to have an Employee Scholarship as well. This scholarship fund is contributed to by the employees and is a \$1,000 scholarship. The recipient of the scholarship must be a high school senior and a child of an employee. This year's scholarship was awarded to **Taylor Byerley**.



One additional Lacreek Electric Association scholarship in the amount of \$1,500 was drawn from the applicant pool from the previous year of non-scholarship recipients. This scholarship was awarded to **Laney Fanning**. On behalf of the Lacreek Electric Board of Directors, General Manager, Staff and Employees, we want to congratulate the recipients of these awards. 911900202

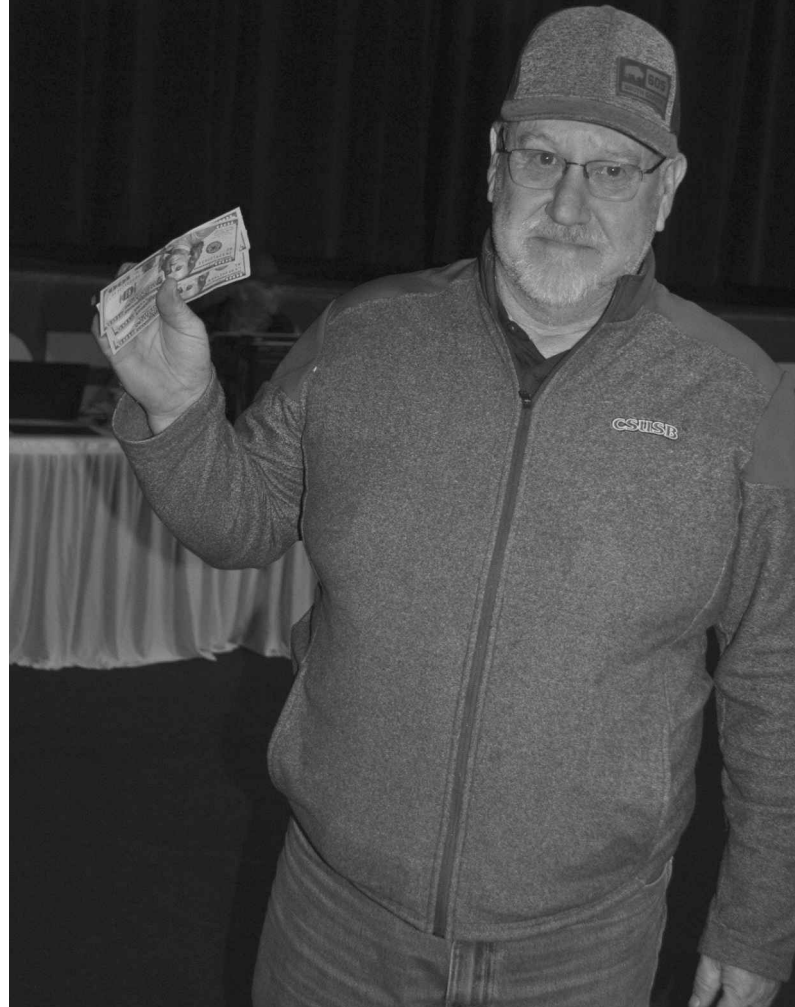


# Lacreek Electric Holds 75th Annual Meeting

Lacreek Electric held its 75th annual meeting in Martin, SD at the Old American Legion Auditorium on April 27, 2023, at 7 p.m. Lacreek served 130 members a sit-down meal. There were 70 registered members at the meeting. There were four zones up for election which ran unopposed leaving all seats of the Board of Directors un-changed. At the conclusion of the meeting, there were door prizes handed out, and the \$300 Grand Prize Winner was Rockie Smith.

## 2023 Annual Meeting Prize Winners

Early Bird Prize - \$75 Bill Credit	Garnett Audiss
Smarthub Table prize - 43 inch Samsung TV donated by Rushmore Electric	Mandy Scherer
Smarthub Table prize - Amazon Fire Tablet	Stuart Livermont
\$50 Cash	Kaye Hodson
\$50 Cash	Lori Cuny
\$50 Cash	David McDonnell
\$50 Cash	Melvin Jorgenson
\$50 Cash	David Booth
\$50 Cash	Wilma Standing Bear
\$50 Cash	Jerald Lyon
\$50 Cash	Donald Larson
\$300 GRAND PRIZE CASH	Rockie Smith



\$300 GRAND PRIZE WINNER, Rockie Smith!



Linemen Matt Kruid, Les Cuny and Lonny Lesmeister giving bucket truck rides



David Booth, winner of a \$50 bill.



# CPR & AED TRAINING

Photo Credit: Nate Breske

## Essential No Matter What Field You Work In Or Play On

**Laura London**

Lake Region Electric Association

Millions of sports fans who tuned into Monday Night Football on January 2nd watched in shock as what had moments before appeared to be a regular night of sporting rivalry, turned into a heroic lifesaving response. Buffalo Bills defensive safety Damar Hamlin, a strong, athletic 25-year-old, suddenly collapsed on the playing field seconds after making a routine play against the Cincinnati Bengals. Almost instantaneously medical personnel sprang into action. The grave situation was reflected in the faces of the players, coaches, staff and fans. While Hamlin had no underlying medical condition, it was later determined that he had

experienced an often-fatal condition called commotio cordis, which is a rare disruption of the heart rhythm caused by a blunt, nonpenetrating impact to the chest that causes arrhythmia without structural damage to the heart. The quick response and administration of CPR saved Hamlin's life.

There are certain professions where the possibility of using life-saving interventions such as CPR and AEDs is more likely than others, and training is necessary. Certain risk factors, whether it be profession, age or health condition, can also increase the likelihood of someone experiencing a cardiac event. The fact is that cardiac arrest can happen anywhere, at any time, to any person.

CPR and AED training is vital regardless of what field you work in or play on.

Nate Breske, a Webster graduate, and member of Lake Region Electric Association is the head athletic trainer for the Buffalo Bills NFL franchise. Breske's affable personality and engaging smile can seem out of place when pictured amongst the hard appearing coaches and personnel of the NFL, but there he is shining bright on the sidelines and behind the scenes to make sure the program runs smoothly. The multi-faceted position of head athletic trainer comes with a load of responsibility, including looking out for the health and safety of the athletes, designing rehabilitation programs for injured players, working closely with the performance and coaching staffs to get the most out of each player on gamedays, managing the medical



staffs, administrating care for injured players, and working with the GM and upper management to bring in players through free agency and the draft. Breske never expected that one of his players would suddenly collapse on the field from cardiac arrest seconds after attempting a tackle, but Breske and his team were prepared.

Breske described what went through his mind when he saw Hamlin collapse on the field, “I instantly knew that it was a major medical issue that would require our assistance and expertise to help. We were prepared, willing and able to help do whatever we could to help save his life.” Lifesaving action was taken and CPR was performed by multiple people on the field in what Breske describes as “a complete team effort.” An AED was also used before Hamlin was transported by ambulance to the hospital. Something that Breske would like others to know: “You have permission to help out to the best of your ability when there is an emergency situation that may make you uncomfortable. Doing something is better than doing nothing at all!”

Breske says the Bills organization requires even non-medical personnel

to have CPR training “Everyone is certified, and we practice our EAP regularly to ensure that we are prepared for emergency situations such as this. The non-medical personnel are educated and will continue to be educated in the importance of knowing what to do in an emergency situation.” Breske has never had to personally perform CPR but recalls performing the Heimlich maneuver on Andy Meek, a high school classmate. Breske said the incident with Hamlin taught the Bills, “It is important to be prepared for situations like this. You never want to be put in this situation, but if you are, being prepared will help to give you the best chances for a good outcome. Not everything was perfect, but we had the best outcome that we could have hoped and prayed for.”

Due to the quick response and efforts by everyone on the field and the medical staff in Cincinnati, Hamlin was recently cleared to return to the game. Breske travelled with him to several heart specialists around the country to make sure all of the doctors were in agreement that Hamlin was physically and mentally healthy enough to return to action.

Damar Hamlin has teamed up with the American Heart Association to encourage people to learn how to perform CPR. Breske calls this a great thing. “The more people that know what to do in this situation will help save lives.” You can join Damar Hamlin’s #3forheart CPR Challenge by visiting the American Heart Association website <https://www.heart.org/en/damar-hamlins-3-for-heart-cpr-challenge>.

Electric Cooperatives in the state of South Dakota require all linemen to be CPR trained and get a refresher every year per OSHA regulations. Mark Patterson, Manager of Loss Control Services at South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) said that not all co-op staff are required to have the training, but the majority are trained because emergencies don’t just happen in the field.

AED devices are recommended at each work site through the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP.) Patterson concurs with Breske that CPR is a good skill to have and refresh. He said employees go through the training “hoping that you never have to use it but if you do, it will come back to you automatically.” While there have been a number of electrical contacts during Patterson’s 13-year career with SDREA, only one time has CPR been performed and in that case, saved the life of a lineman.



American Heart Association

## Damar Hamlin's #3forHeart™ CPR Challenge

Join Damar in taking 3 simple steps to support CPR education and training, research and other lifesaving programs. You can help save lives today.

TAKE THE CHALLENGE

[WWW.HEART.ORG/3](http://WWW.HEART.ORG/3)

# BISON CENTER

The annual buffalo roundup is the most popular event each year at Custer State Park. This year's roundup is Sept. 29. Photo courtesy of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

## New Attraction Draws in Crowds

**Scott Waltman**

While spring was delayed across much of South Dakota, the tourist season is nonetheless quickly approaching.

In other words, it's time for families to start planning vacations and for the state to prepare for the millions of visitors who stop in South Dakota when the weather is warm.

While iconic Most Rushmore is immensely popular and the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally draws hundreds of thousands of visitors, there are scores of other places worth visiting for those who live in or travel through the Black Hills region.

One of the newer attractions is

the Custer State Park Bison Center, which opened last year.

When it comes to attendance, the center more than held its own in 2022. About 300,000 people visited, said Lydia Austin, interpretive program manager for Custer State Park.

Part of the draw was that the Bison Center was a new feature and something different, Austin said. But she doesn't expect much of a drop-off in attendance this summer.

Taylor Studios of Indiana, which works to create engaging exhibits for museums, history centers and other facilities, did a great job in creating a "wow moment" with the Bison Center, Austin said.

The first thing most people

notice when they enter is a mural of stampeding buffalo near the back, she said.

Interactive displays were designed to appeal to both kids and adults.

Austin said one display visitors like tracks grass from the time a buffalo eats it to the time it is discarded was waste. She said she has seen both young and old people spend 15 minutes or more at the display chuckling and having a good time.

There's also a feature where a model buffalo pie can be flipped over so visitors can see what's eating it, she said.

People who stop in can also hear the rumble of a buffalo herd as they walk through the center, she said.

The Bison Center is along the Wildlife Loop at the buffalo corrals within the state park. So many visitors used to stop at the corrals, wander around and ask what they are used for that it's nice to have a place that explains not only the



corrals but so much more, Austin said.

She wants people to stop in, visit the displays and learn all of the little stories that comprise the big story of the bison at the park.

Many people stop at the Bison Center when they take the wildlife loop, she said.

It was designed to add context to what visitors see as they drive through the southern part of the park where they can spot the bison that roam the South Dakota prairie.

Custer State Park's buffalo herd is estimated to be around 1,400, according to information from the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

The biggest day of the year for the Bison Center comes in September during Custer State Park's annual Buffalo Roundup and Arts Festival. This year's event is scheduled for Sept. 28-30. The roundup itself is Sept. 29. Parking lots will open at 6:15 a.m. Mountain Time for people



The Custer State Park Bison Center helps educate visitors about the history and importance of the herd of 1,400 buffalo that live in the park. Photo courtesy of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

who would like to watch the animals get tested, branded and sorted.

A main purpose of the roundup is to manage the health of the herd.

Austin said about 20,000 people visit the park the day of the roundup, easily making it the busiest day of the year.

Now, those folks can visit the Bison Center to learn more about the herd and educate themselves on the importance of the massive, brown, fur-bearing bovine.

Feedback from the center's first year has been very positive, Austin said.

"Wow, this is great. Glad you built it," or some variation thereof, is a common response from visitors, she said.

Austin said there have been no regrets about building the Bison Center. It fits the family attraction niche other visitor centers do, she said.

The aim is for the center is to tell the story of the bison and keep it fresh and dynamic. She wants visitors to learn something new whether it's their first stop or their 10th.

Austin said the goal is to have the Bison Center open from April through November.

The cost of the center was \$5.5 million, Austin said, with \$4 million coming from a grant from The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust. Another \$500,000 came from the South Dakota Legislature, while \$500,000 was raised by the South Dakota Parks and Wildlife Foundation.

To learn more about the Custer State Park Bison Center, visit [gfp.sd.gov/csp-bison-center/](http://gfp.sd.gov/csp-bison-center/).



The Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup each September is popular with tourists and helps the state manage the bison that live in the park. Photo courtesy of the South Dakota Department of Tourism.



**June 3-4, 2023**  
**Siouxland Renaissance Festival**  
 100 N Lyon Boulevard  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 866-489-9241

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

**JUNE 3**  
**Health Connect of South Dakota: The Human Race 5K**  
 9 a.m.  
 Sertoma Park  
 Sioux Falls, SD

**JUNE 3**  
**Lunafest Zonta Women's Art, Music & Film Festival**  
 2:30 p.m.  
 Custer Beacon  
 Custer, SD

**JUNE 3-4**  
**Siouxland Renaissance Festival**  
 100 N Lyon Boulevard  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 866-489-9241

**JUNE 8-10**  
**Black Hills Quilt Show**  
 2:30 p.m.  
 The Monument  
 Rapid City, SD  
 info@bhquilters.org

**JUNE 11**  
**River Honoring Community Potluck**  
 5 p.m.  
 Clay County Park River Shelter  
 Vermillion, SD

**JUNE 16-17**  
**Czech Days**  
 All Day Events  
 Tabor, SD

**JUNE 16-18**  
**Fine Arts In The Hills Show & Sale**  
 Main Street  
 Hill City, SD

**JUNE 21**  
**2023 McCrossan Boys Ranch Golf Classic for Kids**  
 Central Valley Golf Course  
 Hartford, SD  
 605-339-1203

**JUNE 21-24**  
**Crystal Springs Rodeo**  
 Clear Lake, SD  
 605-874-2996

**JUNE 23**  
**Flandreau Fridays**  
 5 p.m.  
 Downtown Flandreau  
 Flandreau, SD

**JUNE 24**  
**Vendor Fair & Farmer's Market**  
 8 a.m.  
 122 Vilas St  
 Hermosa, SD

**JUNE 30**  
**Gregory Community Foundation Polka Fest Fundraiser**  
 6 p.m.  
 Gregory 4H Building  
 Gregory, SD

**JULY 4**  
**Philip VFD Firework Display**  
 Lake Waggoner  
 Philip, SD  
 605-685-3082

**JULY 12**  
**Tracy Area Gardens & Quilts Tour**  
 2 p.m.  
 Tracy, MN

**JULY 15**  
**Huron MS Walk/Run**  
 8 a.m.  
 Lake Byron  
 Huron, SD  
 605-350-5922

**JULY 15-16**  
**Charles Mix Saddle Club SDRA Rodeo**  
 Geddes, SD  
 605-680-2763

**JULY 28-29**  
**Farley Fest**  
 Lake Farley Park  
 Milbank, SD  
 www.farleyfest.com

**AUG 13-14**  
**Twin Brooks Threshing Show**  
 Featuring Allis Chalmers  
 Twin Brooks, SD  
 605-880-2884

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