



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**LACREEK ELECTRIC**  
MARCH 2024 VOL. 26 NO. 11

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## **From Cows to Canvas**

**Michelle Weber Captures  
Rural Life in Art**

Pages 8-9

**Sacred Hoops: Shooting  
for Success**

Pages 12-13

# Director Petitions Available

Board of Director Petitions are available and can be picked up for the zones open for election beginning **Feb. 25, 2024**, from persons interested in running for Lacreek Electric's Board of Directors. The election will be held at the Annual Meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 25, 2024, at the American Legion Auditorium in Martin, S.D. Anyone interested in being a candidate for Lacreek Electric's board of directors who live in Zone 2, East Bennett County; Zone 4, East Oglala Lakota County; Zone 7, Cherry County, NE; Zone 9, West Oglala Lakota County, should stop by the office to obtain a petition.

The directors currently serving these zones are Zone 2, East Bennett County, Brent Ireland; Zone 4, East Oglala Lakota County, Marion Schultz; Zone 7, Cherry County, NE, Tom Schlack; Zone 9, West Oglala Lakota County, Donovan Young Man.

Candidates must live in the zone they plan to represent. The petitions must be signed by at least 15 active members living in the zone the candidate

is running in. All positions are for three-year terms on the board. Petitions must be filed with the board secretary no later than **March 25, 2024**.

Lacreek's Board of Directors currently consists of 13 members representing nine zones. If you choose to run for a Board of Directors for a non-profit organization such as Lacreek Electric, you have inherently accepted fundamental responsibilities in addition to a commitment of time and accountability to the cooperative on behalf of the members it serves, keeping in mind, the board has ultimate legal responsibility for the cooperative. A director must act in good faith, in the best interest of Lacreek Electric. A director possesses a fiduciary duty to Lacreek Electric and its members. A director is accountable for the assets and resources of the cooperative. They should never use their board position to advance their private interests. A director should concentrate on the goals and vision of Lacreek Electric.



**COOPERATIVE  
CONNECTIONS**

**LACREEK ELECTRIC**

(USPS No. 018-912)

**Board of Directors**

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

**Management Staff**

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

**Office Personnel**

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

**Operations Personnel**

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.  
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 POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Lacreek Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 220, Martin, SD 57551; Telephone (605) 685-6581; Fax (605) 685-6957

# December Board Meeting

## Highlights from December Meeting

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 December 19, 2023, beginning at 1:00 P.M. All board members were present.

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Ashley Turgeon to record board minutes
- Minutes of the November 21<sup>st</sup> board meeting
- Operating Report for October
- Disbursements for November
- November Analysis of Investments
- New Members
- Philip Motors Quote for Truck #8 and Truck #13

The board discussed the following items:

- 2023 Revenue Deferral
- Affordable and Reliable Energy by Jim Matheson
- 2024 New Rate Design

The board heard reports from management. These included


details of operations, member services, communications, upcoming projects and safety. Tom and Marion also reported on the NREA Annual Meeting they attended. The Rushmore Electric Board Meeting was also reported on by Tom. Clarence, Tom, Marion and Troy reported on the Mid-West Annual Meeting that they had the to opportunity to attend.

President Wade Risse and General Manager Josh Fanning congratulated Anna Haynes on her last board meeting and thanked her for her work over the years.

The Staff was excused from the meeting and the General Manager, Finance Managers, and Board went into executive session from 3:15 to 4:25 PM.


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

Next Board Meeting – January 16, 2024 at 1:00 PM



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

NAME: _____	ACCOUNT #: _____	METER #: ____-____
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## Make Fall Safety a Top Priority

It may come as a surprise that the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death is falls. In 2021, 44,686 people died in falls at home and at work, according to Injury Facts®. For working adults, depending on the industry, falls can be the leading cause of death.

### Falls are 100% Preventable

March is Ladder Safety Month. Whether working from a ladder, roof or scaffolding, it's important to plan ahead, assess the risk and use the right equipment. First, determine if working from a height is absolutely necessary or if there is another way to do the task safely.

- Discuss the task with coworkers and determine what safety equipment is needed
- Make sure you are properly trained on how to use the equipment
- Scan the work area for potential hazards before starting the job
- Make sure you have level ground to set up the equipment
- If working outside, check the weather forecast; never work in inclement weather
- Use the correct tool for the job, and use it as intended
- Ensure stepladders have a locking device to hold the front and back open
- Always keep two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand on the ladder
- Place the ladder on a solid surface and never lean it against an unstable surface
- A straight or extension ladder should be one foot away from the surface it rests on for every four feet of height and extend at least three feet over the top edge
- Securely fasten straight and extension ladders to an upper support
- Wear slip-resistant shoes and don't stand higher than the third rung from the top
- Don't lean or reach while on a ladder, and have someone support the bottom
- Never use old or damaged equipment; check thoroughly before use

### Fall Hazards at Home

Are you a weekend warrior or do-it-yourselfer? If you take on home improvement or other weekend projects, it's important to prepare yourself for physical exertion, especially if you've been sedentary through the winter months, and take extra precautions to prevent falls.

Risky projects, like installing siding, gutters or roofs, are best left to professionals. Saving money isn't worth risking a debilitating or fatal fall.

At home or at work, many of the same rules apply. When taking on a project:

- Practice all of the ladder safety tips mentioned above
- Keep the work area clear of hazards and immediately clean up spills
- Read all instructions and safety precautions on your equipment
- Don't wear loose clothing that can get caught in equipment

We tend to think we're always safe on flat ground, but the thousands of injuries each year tell us otherwise.

- Falls are the #1 cause of death for older adults; fall-proof your home
- Keep floors and surfaces clear of clutter
- Keep file cabinets and desk drawers closed
- Keep electrical and phone cords out of traffic areas
- Install handrails on stairways
- Wear sensible footwear
- Never stand on chairs, tables or any surface with wheels
- Properly arrange furniture to create open pathways
- Maintain good lighting indoors and out

More than 6.9 million people were treated in emergency rooms for fall-related injuries in 2021. A fall can end in death or disability in a split second, but with a few simple precautions, you'll be sure stay safe at home and at work.

*Source: National Safety Council*



### Trim Your Trees

#### Brace Tapio, Age 8

Brace Tapio cautions readers to trim their trees to prevent power line damage. Brace's parents are Nate and Elsa Tapio from Armour, S.D., members of Douglas Electric Cooperative.

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

# SEAFOOD SPECIALS

## CAJUN SHRIMP

### Ingredients:

1 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined  
2-3 tsps. cajun seasoning  
2 tbsps. butter

### Method

Coat shrimp with seasoning. Melt butter in large skillet on medium heat. Add shrimp; cook and stir three minutes or just until shrimp turn pink. Serve over cooked rice, if desired.

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

## CRAB SALAD SPREAD

### Ingredients:

8-12 oz. imitation crab meat, flake style, tear into small pieces  
1 tbsp. lemon juice  
1 cup (approx.) shredded Cheddar cheese  
1 small can black olives, sliced  
Mayo (must be Mayo), to get correct texture, less is better than too much  
1/4 to 1/2 pepper, cracked

### Method

Mix by hand. Serve with Club or Ritz crackers.

Linda Hubbard  
Rapid City, S.D.

## CREAMY SHRIMP LINGUINE

### Ingredients:

8 oz. linguine  
1 tbsp. butter  
1 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined  
1 cup heavy cream  
1 package garlic butter shrimp scampi  
2 tbsps. white wine

### Method

Cook pasta as directed on package. Drain well.

Melt butter in large skillet on medium-high heat. Add shrimp; cook and stir 2 minutes or just until shrimp turn pink. Add cooked pasta, Seasoning Mix, cream and wine. Reduce heat to medium; cook 1 to 2 minutes or until heated through, stirring occasionally. Serve with grated Parmesan cheese.

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

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

# Spring Cleaning Tips to Maximize Efficiency



**Miranda Boutelle**  
Efficiency Services Group

**Q:** What are some energy-saving tasks I can add to my spring cleaning list?

**A:** Spring is a great time to refresh, clean and enhance energy efficiency at home. By adopting simple yet effective energy-saving strategies during our spring-cleaning routines, we can create an efficient living environment that may also lower our utility bills and extend the life of our heavily used appliances.

Be sure to include these spring cleaning tips to add some energy savings to the job.

Even though it's out of sight, don't leave it out of mind. Check the filter in your HVAC system. Your furnace worked hard during the winter. Ensuring your system has a clean filter is a low-cost and easy way to protect your equipment and maximize efficiency. A dirty furnace filter can cause your system to work harder than necessary, decreasing efficiency and shortening the system's life.

While the filter is easy to replace yourself, you should have your air conditioning serviced and professionally cleaned. Both the indoor and outdoor units should be cleaned. Dirty refrigerant coils reduce efficiency. This also applies to heat pumps and ductless heat pumps, also known as mini-split systems. The technician can check refrigerant levels and refill or repair if necessary.

HVAC contractors get busy responding to calls for repairs during the summer heat. Scheduling cleaning services for your air conditioning in the spring – before the heat of the summer – can ensure the work gets done before the rush and even save you money. Some HVAC contractors offer special discounts for cleaning services in the milder months, which helps fill their schedules and keep their technicians working.

Window AC units can get dirty, too. They can be cleaned with the proper tools, cleaning agents and know-how. Always unplug before

cleaning, and wait until completely dry to plug it back in again. Take the time to clean it properly in the spring before you need it in the summer.

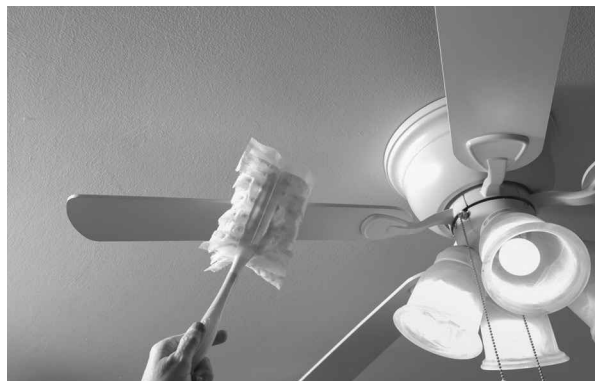
Cleaning light fixtures and fixture covers can brighten your space by removing dust and grime collected during the winter. While you are at it, be sure to check your bulbs and replace any incandescent or compact fluorescent with energy-saving LEDs. Although they tend to cost a little more, LEDs last longer and use less energy.

Good-quality LED light bulbs are expected to last 30,000 to 50,000 hours, according to the Department of Energy. A typical incandescent lamp lasts about 1,000 hours, and a comparable CFL lasts 8,000 to 10,000 hours. To put this into everyday use, if you have an LED light on for 10 hours per day, it can last 13 years compared to only about three months for incandescent bulbs and about two-and-a-half years for CFLs.

Don't forget the oven. A clean oven heats more evenly and quickly, providing better results and lower energy use. A clean oven window allows you to see the food and how it's cooking without opening the oven door, which wastes energy.

If cleaning windows is on the list, check the seals and sash locks to ensure they close tightly. Check for any areas that need caulking or sealing to reduce drafts. Sealing around windows contributes to year-round comfort in your home. Clean windows also allow more light into the home, reducing the need to turn on lamps and overhead fixtures.

Spring is the ideal time to declutter, deep clean and implement practices that not only tidy our homes but also reduce energy consumption, contributing positively to our homes' energy efficiency and saving money on energy use.



# Käsemeister Creamery

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

Spink Colony's Käsemeister Creamery continues to perfect the art of cheese making while continuously looking for more ways to increase its economic footprint.

The creamery is located at a Hutterite colony about nine miles south of Frankfort, which produces over 150 types of cheese, which are sold in stores throughout the state and into North Dakota and Minnesota.

The creamery's manager, Jeremy Wipf, said the business also gets online orders regularly that go throughout the United States.

"We're always trying to get into more stores," Wipf said, which isn't easy in the competitive world of cheese and dairy products.

"The bigger creameries are our biggest competition," Wipf said. "But we're coming along. We're still growing slowly. We're only using half of our milk right now, so we will have the other half to use up. We've got room for expansion if



we could get in with a new distributor that isn't in South Dakota. There's plenty of cheese around. There's always competition."

The idea for the creamery came about in 2016. After securing a business loan, the Spink Colony bought the equipment necessary to start the business in 2018.

In fall of 2018, the creamery officially opened for business.

Käsemeister Creamery employs five full-time and 12 part-time employees from Spink Colony. "When we need more help, like when we make the cheese, we have extra help. It gets a little more difficult at times, such as harvest. During those times, we just have to do what we can and work harder and longer," Wipf said.

The creamery source 100% of the milk used to make the cheese from the colony's dairy operation, which milks around 100 cows. The cows are a three-way cross of Montbeliarde, Swedish Red, and Holstein.

"The idea behind it is a smaller cow that takes less feed but has more body fat, more protein – which at the end of the day is what pays the bills," Wipf explained.

The creamery is hoping to break into the whey industry, which would allow them to sell a byproduct from making the cheese.

"We basically have to throw away the whey right now," Wipf said.

For every 10 pounds of milk, you get one pound of cheese and nine pounds of whey, according to Wipf.

A separate facility would be needed to process the whey byproduct into whey protein, a product currently in high demand.

"But we're too small to invest in equipment for a facility. You've got to have a separate facility for processing whey. There's a lot of demand for it, but you have to have a lot for it to be feasible," Wipf said.

Creamery's current processing facility is comprised of all stainless steel machinery, which was put together by workers from the colony. A 14,700 square foot facility hosts both the processing area and retail store front.

Check out the cheeses and other products offered by Käsemeister Creamery online at [www.kasemeister.com](http://www.kasemeister.com).





Rural Artist Michelle Weber has illustrated 11 children books in addition to showcasing her art nationwide and internationally.

## Michelle Weber Captures Rural Life in Art

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

During her upbringing in Windom, Minn., Michelle Weber discovered her passion for art at a young age. She was the kid who was always doodling, often paying more attention to her drawings than to the class. Holding on to her passion, Weber took her first art class in high school with her art

teacher, Mark Nass. Although the class had a rocky start, Nass recognized her potential and helped fuel a passion that would ultimately lead Weber to becoming a prominent rural artist.

“I was a junior in high school when I enrolled in my first real art class, and to be honest, I kind of hated it,” said Weber. “That first week, I was mortified that I wasn’t any good.”

Initially contemplating dropping the class, Weber sought a signature from her art teacher to change her art class to a study hall instead. Despite her request, Nass refused to let her drop the class and encouraged her to try give the class another chance.

“After a few weeks, everything just clicked,” said Weber. “I fell in love with painting and began living in the school’s art room.”

In less than a year, Weber made substantial progress in her artistic abilities. Enough so, that her teacher encouraged her to apply for the Congressional Art Competition. She applied,



and her painting not only won in her district but also earned a spot in the U.S. Capitol building in Washington D.C., where it was showcased for an entire year.

Weber's success in the Congressional Art Competition foreshadowed what was to come. Drawing inspiration from her upbringing on a farm and involvement in 4-H, Weber began primarily painting livestock. In 2011, Weber's friend from Mitchell, S.D., Amanda Radke, approached her with a request to illustrate a children's book featuring livestock and rural agriculture, a perfect fit for Weber's artwork. This opportunity led to the creation of "A World With Cows," marking Weber's first foray into a full-time career as an artist.

"The book was a huge stepping stone for both of us," said Weber.

The children's book marked not only the beginning of a career but also established Weber's niche – capturing the focal point of rural life on canvas: livestock, horses, buffalo, and more. Weber has since illustrated 10 additional children's books and successfully sold her artwork both nationwide and internationally.

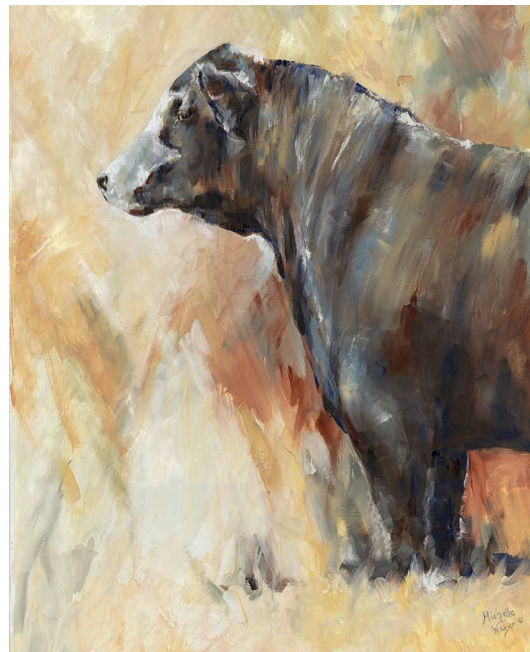
Traditionally, her oil paintings have been rooted in a realism, capturing every detail of the depicted animals. More recently, Weber has expanded her art to include a more whimsical and abstract representation of the rural lifestyle.

"My niche market is the producer, so it's important that my art reflects an authentic rural lifestyle," said Weber. "I want these paintings to have a touch of who I am, but also have the integrity of this lifestyle retained on canvas too."

Today, Weber resides just outside Lake Benton, Minn., a town just outside the South Dakota border. From her small town, Michelle Weber also maintains a website, [michelleweberstudio.com](http://michelleweberstudio.com), where she showcases a wide range of products

featuring her artwork, including prints, notecards, children's books, and even cake pans. In addition to her website, Weber recently opened a studio named, "The Studio by Michelle Weber" in the center Lake Benton.

"The Studio is a space located right in the heart of Lake Benton," said Weber. "Some people look at Lake Benton with a population of less than 700 or less and ask, 'Why would you open your studio there?' But I stand behind supporting these small. They are the heartbeat of this country, so it only seemed fitting to bring it home."



A Weber painting, titled "Side Eye."



Weber is widely known for her oil paintings that capture the essence of an authentic rural lifestyle on canvas.



Lacreek Electric Association Inc.  
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



# 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

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

GUEST SPEAKER



**Registration Gift**  
\$20 Bill Credit



**Meal Voucher**  
Redeem @  
Participating  
Locations



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



JOIN US!



**25**  
APRIL  
AT 6 PM





More information  
**+ 605.685.6581**

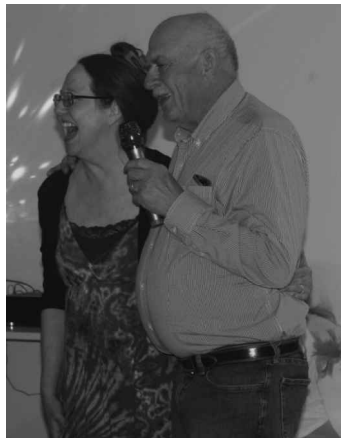


Visit our website  
**www.lacreek.com**

## After 31 Years of Service to Lacreek Electric, Anna Haynes says, "Hello Retirement!"

Anna Haynes started her career at Lacreek Electric in October of 1992. She started at the front counter, as most do here at Lacreek and then worked her way up the ladder. In the 31 years she worked at Lacreek, she saw numerous changes take place. She has been an amazing asset to Lacreek Electric and it's membership.

At her retirement celebration the end of January, many people stood up and spoke to exactly that. She was always looking for new ways to improve upon things and was a stickler for accuracy. She will definitely be missed here at Lacreek although she has made sure to remind us all, she is just a phone call away.



**Photographed:**  
Anna Haynes and Wayne Sterkel

## 3/1/24 . EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION

L V Z A S V C Z T O T C F G A R R E T T  
I F R V H R H Y E C C X D A M O N N K Y  
Q F O U E Y R T E D B H H O N B I H M E  
V S J P R W H K A Q D K A K K T E P T G  
I C P T R K L Z M H G Z A Y W C D C E M  
A N O J Y Q M X Y R C C A T S T Y Z R F  
K S P D J E S S E Y J D J N R O M L R D  
Z Y B J Y R V M J U S T I N X I N I I P  
K H U O P H X S B C M F X B P V N W K F  
I C O S T U D Y U A L A L O N N Y A Z E  
B A I H T R X S R C S S T P W R J G N S  
J M P L D L A E P V V H L T O J I K K Z  
E E E T D L L C D A N E L A H W Z L Z D  
S R Y V D A I P I F M E S E A E E D E S  
S O X S U D W S P E F K G J Y R W M W Y  
I N B I R C U T A Y B A D O T X O K N L  
C J Z L Y T R A C E V S R R X N Q N H E  
A L X C A X P Z E R Z I D D E K O D Y S  
C J Z T N B E E X Y O T O N S S O V X  
C D D H E N R Y V U L R J N D K W O H N

Jesse	Mike	Katrina
Jordon	Tracie	Lisa
Dane	Kasi	Les
Lonny	Sherry	Kody
Garrett	Ashley	Matthew
Ryan	Jessica	Chayson
Aaron	Amy	Riley
Trace	Josh	Cameron
Tee	Cody	Henry
Damon	Terri	Justin


All of us here at Lacreek Electric would like to wish Anna a VERY happy retirement! You can guarantee this wonderful woman would give the shirt off her back to any one of us in her Lacreek family, and that includes all of you, the members! She has poured her heart and soul into Lacreek for many years and will be spoken of highly for years to come. Happy and safe travels Anna! We know your hippie soul is ready to take you wherever the road turns..

# Rate Change Doesn't Always Mean Rate Increase. Sometimes It Means Membership Has More Control.

After nearly three years of study and much discussion, Lacreek Electric Association's board of directors voted to approve a new rate structure for all rate classes. As a cooperative, Lacreek Electric has to purchase power to then be able to provide it to the membership. The cost of that power is made up of about 50% demand charge. To reflect this, all rate schedules now will include a charge for the demand that members place on the electric system each month. The board of directors has chosen this route as we do not want a rate with excess margins, nor do we want a rate that does not cover costs. Lacreek Electric is a non-profit, member-owned electric cooperative. Rates are designed to return only the cost of providing electric service to its members. If there are any margins or profits, they are returned to the members as capital credits.

This change allows the membership to adjust their electric use to manage their demand costs. "I look forward to hearing from the membership and helping them figure out ways we can work together to help lower their demand during their peak times," says Jessica Cook, Member Service at Lacreek. Members who can reduce their demand have the potential to have a lower bill than they currently do. This is by no means trying to discourage people from using electricity, we are just wanting them to use it more wisely and learn to change a few habits. Instead of starting a load of laundry, a load of dishes and plugging in a space heater all at the same time, one would spread those tasks out to lower the amount of power a single home is trying to pull off the lines at one given time.

To show an example of what this rate change is going to look like, let's take a residence that has *above-average usage* of 2,000 kWh a month and show the difference between the current rate and the one that will be taking place on April 1<sup>st</sup>. This way we can compare apples to apples. It will also help give you a visual aid so that if you would like to look at what your historical demand is, you can see where to look to calculate using your own personal KW and kWh from previous billing statements.



**LACREEK ELECTRIC**

Account Number: 12356789  
Member Name: SALLY O'MALLY  
Statement Date: 05/01/2023  
Phone #: (605) 666-6666

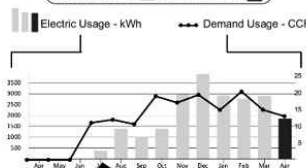
**Old Rate**

**TOTAL DUE**  
05/20/2023  
**\$220.08**  
After Due Date 232.58

Office Hours: 7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Mon - Fri  
Phone: (605) 685-6581  
Toll Free Pay-by-Phone (855) 385-9980  
www.lacreek.com

Usage History

Previous Year Current Month



Account Number: 123456789 Service Address: 123-45-678

Meter No.	Services From	To	Days	Readings Previous	Present	Meter Multiplier	kWh Usage	Demand Reading	Rate
16-0343 13-0334H	03/31/23 03/31/23	05/01/23 05/01/23	31	940 1431	2940 1454	1.0 40.0	2,000 920	12.73 9.2	003 - Residential Electric Heat 013 - Electric Heat Sub Meter

**Activity Since Last Billing**


Previous Balance 317.67  
Payment 04/20/2023 -317.67  
**Balance Forward 0.00**

**Detail of Charges**

KWH Charge 800 kWh @ 0.112500 90.00  
KWH Charge 1,200 kWh @ 0.082500 99.00  
Facility Charge 40.00  
KWH Charge 920 kWh @ -0.020000 -18.40  
4.5% Sales Tax 9.48

**Total Current Charges 220.08**  
**Balance Forward 0.00**  
**Total Amount Due 220.08**

**Message From Lacreek Electric**  
POLE TESTERS WILL BE WORKING IN THE WOUNDED KNEE AND MANDERSON AREAMAINTEANCE CREW WILL BE NEAR PORCUPINE AND MANDERSON



**LACREEK ELECTRIC**

Account Number: 12356789  
Member Name: SALLY O'MALLY  
Statement Date: 05/01/2024  
Phone #: (605) 666-6666

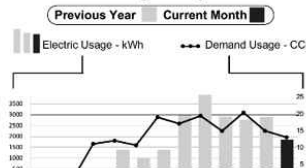
**New Rate**

**TOTAL DUE**  
05/20/2024  
**\$226.72**  
After Due Date 239.22

Office Hours: 7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Mon - Fri  
Phone: (605) 685-6581  
Toll Free Pay-by-Phone (855) 385-9980  
www.lacreek.com

Usage History

Previous Year Current Month



Account Number: 123456789 Service Address: 123-45-678

Meter No.	Services From	To	Days	Readings Previous	Present	Meter Multiplier	kWh Usage	Demand Reading	Rate
16-0343 13-0334H	04/01/24 04/01/24	05/01/24 05/01/24	31	940 1431	2940 1454	1.0 40.0	2,000 920	12.73 9.2	003 - Residential Electric Heat 013 - Electric Heat Sub Meter

**Activity Since Last Billing**

Previous Balance 317.67  
Payment 04/20/2023 -317.67  
**Balance Forward 0.00**

**Detail of Charges**

KWH Charge 2,000 kWh @ 0.088000 176.00  
Demand Charge 12.73 KW @ 1.000000 12.73  
Facility Charge 47.25  
KWH Charge 920 kWh @ -0.020000 -18.40  
4.2% Sales Tax 9.14

**Total Current Charges 226.72**  
**Balance Forward 0.00**  
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**Message From Lacreek Electric**  
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Sacred Hoops Coach Tuffy Morrison is just one of many volunteer coaches who make Sacred Hoops Basketball a reality for rural athletes.

# SHOOTING FOR SUCCESS

## Sacred Hoops Basketball Scores Big with Rural Youth

### Frank Turner

[frank.turner@sdrea.coop](mailto:frank.turner@sdrea.coop)

Sacred Hoops Basketball, a nonprofit organization unique to South Dakota, has been changing the game for youth basketball across the state for more than six years. Using basketball as a tool for youth development, the program organizes teams, trains coaches, and hosts tournaments and workshops for young individuals in all communities – both big and small.

Since the program's conception, the emphasis has centered on rural engagement. Allan Bertram, the owner and operator of Sacred Hoops, co-founded the program alongside Jordan Long and a few other movers and shakers as a way to bring quality basketball instruction to students who would otherwise need to travel hundreds of miles to participate. Their goal was to make basketball accessible to all athletes across the state, not only improving their basketball skills but

also their life skills.

"We wanted to bridge the gap for kids in rural areas, particularly our athletes in low socio-economic areas who may not have been able to play basketball otherwise," said Bertram. "We want to ensure that every kid who wants to play can."

Beyond hosting tournaments and teams, Bertram and the organization's other volunteers have found other ways to make changes on and off the basketball court. In addition to hosting more than 120 high school instruction programs across the state, Sacred Hoops Basketball annually distributes more than \$70,000 in scholarships that aid athletes from low-income families to play ball. The organization was also the driving force behind a recent initiative that placed 2,000 new pairs of shoes in the hands of children from select, rural



Sacred Hoops Director and Coach Ted Standing Soldier draws up a play for the the Sacred Hoops West River Youth Team.

elementary schools in South Dakota.

“We’ve seen so many kids grow and fulfill their passion,” said Bertram. “In today’s world, our youth sometimes don’t understand what their purpose or passion is, and that’s why so many of our youth are struggling. It doesn’t matter what a kid is passionate about – it could be music, sports, gaming, or whatever – but it’s our job to help feed that passion because that is what gives those kids a purpose.”

Today, the program has expanded to encompass more than 50 dedicated volunteers and 600 athletes across 60 teams in their summer season, with athletes spanning from third grade to high school. These numbers, said Bertram, have added up to a real impact for athletes across the state. Within Sacred Hoops Basketball, more than 75 athletes have gone on to play college-level basketball.

“It gives us a great sense of pride because those kids are not only getting a post-secondary degree but also get to continue their passion by playing at the next level,” said Bertram. “Many of these kids come from rural areas or

locations.”

Sacred Hoops Basketball Director and Coach Ted Standing Soldier also emphasized the impact that the nonprofit has had on West River athletes. Standing Soldier regularly works with athletes from several rural

West River communities, including Pine Ridge, Belle Fourche, Kadoka, and more.

“We have athletes from all over come to play on one team, and it’s changing the game for these kids. We have seen several of our athletes start making junior varsity and varsity teams as middle schoolers,” said Standing Soldier. “These are kids we want to help reach their full potential, both on and off the court.”

Reflecting on his upbringing, Standing Soldier said that basketball played a significant role in his early life, ultimately leading to college scholarships that allowed him to play basketball for Platte Community College in Nebraska and later the University of Mary in North Dakota. Those opportunities, he said, are ones that he wants to share with other youth in South Dakota.

“Basketball has been a part of my entire life,” he said. “I developed a love for the game. God has used it to impact my entire life, and now I’m using it to impact others.”



The Sacred Hoops Basketball AAU West Coast National Championship Team.



Ali Van Sambeek's one-year-old smiles while feeding the chickens.

## Keeping Chickens

**Shannon Marvel**

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During summertime mornings, Ali Van Sambeek will send her five-year-old out into the backyard to retrieve what's needed to cook that morning's breakfast.

"He's learned how to fry an egg on the stove, so in the summer he'll go out to the coop, bring back an egg and cook himself breakfast. Or I'll tell kids we need some tomatoes and eggs for breakfast, and they'll go out to get them in the backyard," Van Sambeek said.

Nestled in the Black Hills between Hermosa and Keystone, Ali and her husband raise four children, all under the age of seven, and a couple dozen chickens.

The chickens were added to the Van Sambeek family about a year ago.

"We wanted our kids to have more chores. We both grew up ranching and farming. We don't personally do that

anymore and we wanted our kids to have a taste of that life," Van Sambeek said.

"We haven't had to buy a store-bought egg since we started," she gleamed.

To begin, Van Sambeek started asking friends who raised their own chickens in their backyards a lot of questions.

Around that time and by chance, Van Sambeek learned of a friend that was looking to get rid of a couple hens and a coop for free.

So Van Sambeek took advantage of the opportunity and gave the hens a home in her backyard.

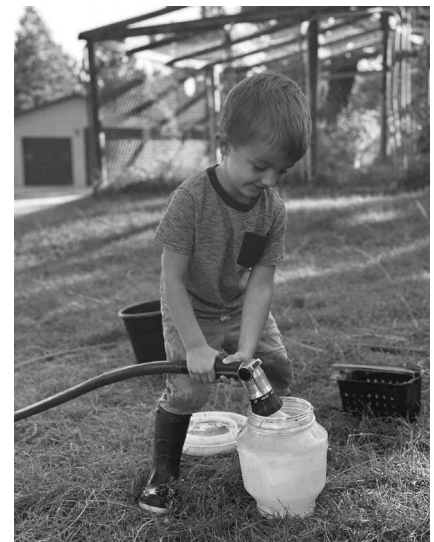
"We started with four, and were up to 20 at one point. And now we're down a little bit after an unfortunate situation with a hawk. That was our kids' first experience with losing animals. But this spring we'll get chicks again," Van Sambeek said.

The Van Sambeeks started off with Dominique brown layer chickens, but expanded the number of breeds in their

coop to get a more colorful plethora of eggs.

"I really wanted the green, dark brown and blue eggs. We pretty much have all the colors now. They've stopped laying throughout the winter, in the summer we'll get about eight or nine eggs a day," Van Sambeek said.

With her children being at the ages of 7, 5, 3 and 1, raising chickens has been



Ali Van Sambeek's son refills the water jug for the family's chickens.

a great way to teach them that their food doesn't just come from the store.

"Somebody has to put work into it – it's kind of cool when it's your own work. That's been one of the biggest things. We also have a pretty big garden. We feed the scraps from the garden back to the chickens. It's so much fun for the kids to see that process," Van Sambeek said.

Over in the eastern part of the state near Brandon, Stephanie Peterson has taken her love of raising backyard chickens and her expertise in doing so to new levels.

Peterson grew up in Lemmon and Rapid City before moving to Washington, D.C., to work on Capitol Hill for U.S. Sen. Tom Daschle.

During her time in Washington, D.C., Peterson raised four backyard chickens. Nine years ago, Peterson and her family moved back to South Dakota and bought a small acreage just outside of Brandon.

She purchased 15 hens and one rooster in the process and immensely enjoyed caring for the chickens and was entertained by their antics.

That developed into a full-fledged business for Peterson, named Fruit of the Coop.

"I heard that the backyard chicken keeping classes instructor for Sioux Falls Community Education was no longer available to teach, and I stepped right into the opening. I've been teaching classes since 2015. I also help small communities draft and pass backyard chicken ordinances for their towns, in addition to offering private consultations for folks who want personalized help getting started with backyard chickens," Peterson said.

She even offers advanced classes on veterinary care for flocks and is a distributor of non-GMO, organic chicken feed grown and milled by a local family farm.

"I started my egg business in 2016, working directly with chefs and restaurant owners to provide pasture-raised eggs to Sioux Falls restaurants. I also offer farm tours and field trips, and operate a farm stay AirBnb here at Fruit of the Coop," Peterson said.

What drives Peterson's passion for chicken and eggs is how interesting of an animal she's found chickens to be, with what she described as "unique biological makeups and also fun personalities."

Over the years, Peterson has seen the number of people raising their own chickens increase.

According to the American Pet Product Association's survey, ownership of backyard chickens increased from 8% in 2018 to 13% in 2020.

"And since COVID-19, the numbers have skyrocketed. The pandemic allowed for folks to have the time to pursue their backyard chicken hobby. But more importantly, many people began to focus on where their food was coming from and how to eat more locally," Peterson said.

"Raising your own chickens for eggs is an easy way to take control of a small part of the food system we all participate in. It

is now estimated that 12 million people in the U.S. own backyard chickens."

## Things you need to know when considering backyard chickens:

- Hatching a Plan (local laws, cost, choosing a breed, where to buy)
- Chicken Little (setting up a brooder, food and water, heat, socializing)
- Feather Your Nest (coops and runs, predator proofing, cleaning, nest boxes, ventilation, space needed, seasonal care)
- Chicken Scratch (feeders and waterers, nutrient-dense feed, oyster shell, grit, treats)
- Ruling the Roost (free range, dust baths, molting, pecking order, injuries and diseases)
- Eggs/The Fruit of Your Coop (laying age, the "bloom," winter laying)



The Van Sambeek kids inspect the chicks that will be added to their coop.



**MARCH 1-3, 2024**  
**National Pheasant**  
**Fest & Quail Classic**  
 1201 N West Ave.  
 Sioux Falls, SD

**MARCH 2**  
**Live on Stage**  
 High Country Guest Ranch  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 7**  
**Elevate Rapid City Economic Summit**  
 8 a.m.  
 The Monument  
 Rapid City, SD

**MARCH 9**  
**French Toast/Pancake Feed & Health Fair**  
 8:30 a.m.  
 Tea Community Building  
 Tea, SD

**MARCH 9**  
**SunCatcher Therapeutic Riding Academy & 3rd Annual Shamrock Gala**  
 5 p.m.  
 Alex Johnson Ballroom  
 Rapid City, SD

**MARCH 11-15**  
**Black Hills Institute's 50th Anniversary Celebration**  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 14-16**  
**Spring Rummage Fundraiser**  
 Spearfish Senior Center  
 Spearfish, SD

**MARCH 15**  
**East Dakota Chapter NWF 31st Annual Banquet**  
 Ramkota Exhibit Hall  
 Sioux Falls, SD

**MARCH 15-16**  
**Badlands Quilter Weekend Getaway**  
 5:30 p.m. Friday, all day Saturday  
 Wall Community Center  
 Wall, SD

**MARCH 16**  
**Live On Stage**  
 High Country Guest Ranch  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 16**  
**South Dakota Poetry Society Poetry on the Road & Open Mic**  
 1 p.m.  
 Tri-State Museum  
 Belle Fourche, SD

**MARCH 16-17**  
**Hill City Antiques, Railroad & Collectibles Show & Sale**  
 Hill City Center  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 17**  
**St. Patrick's Day Green Pancakes and Sausage**  
 8:30 a.m.  
 RVUMC  
 Rapid City, SD

**MARCH 20-23**  
**Hill City Restaurant Week**  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 23**  
**Tyndall VFW Vegas Night**  
 7:30 p.m.  
 Tyndall Community Center  
 Tyndall, SD

**MARCH 23**  
**Hill City Children's Easter Egg Hunt**  
 Visitor Info Center  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 24**  
**Ham Dinner & Silent Auction**  
 11:45 a.m.  
 RVUMC  
 Rapid City, SD

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

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

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

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

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

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