A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

LACREEK ELECTRIC
OCTOBER 2026 VOL. 27 NO. 6

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Pick of the Patch

Pumpkin Patches Offer Plenty of Reasons to Get Outside this Fall

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Ghost Town Under Lake Oahe

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Where Has the Year Gone?



Josh Fanning
General Manager

It's hard to believe we are already turning the page to October. It seems like just yesterday we were talking about the beginning of a new year, preparing for spring storms, welcoming summer and watching another irrigation season get underway. And now, somehow, we find ourselves looking ahead to cooler temperatures and the start of another heating season.

The older I get, the faster the years seem to go. Between the busy days, unexpected challenges, long hours and everything happening throughout our communities, it can be easy to simply keep moving from one thing to the next without taking the time to stop and reflect.

But as we enter this new season, I want to take a moment to simply say thank you.

Thank you for being members of Lacreek Electric. Thank you for your patience when the weather doesn't cooperate, for your understanding when outages or other challenges arise, and for the support you show your cooperative throughout the year. We never take that support for granted.

Lacreek Electric is more than poles, wires, substations and meters. At its heart, it is people. It is our employees who work hard every day to keep the lights on, and it is the members and communities we are proud to serve. That connection is something we truly value.

October also brings a transition for many of our members. This month marks the beginning of heating season, as cooler temperatures begin settling into our area. It is also the final month of the controlled irrigation season. As we make these seasonal changes, we know many of you are preparing your homes, businesses and operations for the months ahead.

As another busy year continues to move quickly toward its close, I hope we can all take a little time to enjoy the changing seasons and appreciate the people and communities around us.

On behalf of myself, our Board of Directors and every employee at Lacreek Electric, thank you for the trust you place in us and for allowing us the privilege of serving you.

We are proud to call this home, proud to serve our communities and most importantly, proud to serve you.

Thank you for being a part of the Lacreek Electric family.

— **Josh Fanning**
General Manager/CEO
Lacreek Electric Association Inc.



July 2026 Board Meeting Highlights

The regular meeting of the Lacreek Electric Association Board of Directors was held July 21, 2026, at the Cooperative office in Martin, South Dakota. President Brent Ireland called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Directors present were Connie Whirlwind Horse, Marion Schultz, Tom Schlack, Wade Risse, Angela Rascher, Michel Melvin, Troy Kuxhaus, Hadley Livermont, Scott Larson and Cole Lange. Also present were General Manager Josh Fanning, Finance Manager Kasi Harris, Operations Manager Mike Pisha, Work Order/Staff Assistant Sherry Bakley, Member Services/IT Jessica Cook and Administrative Assistant Ashley Turgeon. Absent was Director Jerry Sharp.

Items Approved

- Approved Ashley Turgeon to record the Board minutes.
- Approved the June 2026 Board meeting minutes.
- Approved the July meeting agenda, including the addition of an executive session.
- Accepted the May Operating Report.
- Approved June checks and disbursements.
- Accepted the June Analysis of Investments.
- Approved the list of new members.
- Approved a wage increase for all staff, excluding the General Manager.

Items Discussed & Reported

- **Operations:** Updates were provided on right-of-way clearing, the Sunrise Housing Addition, Niobrara South Circuit underground replacement, Shannon Substation work and upcoming construction projects. 652900203

- **Load Control & Safety:** The Board received updates on the load control program and discussed the importance of continued electrical safety education, particularly during the summer months.

- **Basin Electric & SDREA:** Updates included electric rates and demand charges, Basin Electric matters, the NRPPD transition, transmission projects, GRIP projects and wildfire mitigation planning.

- **Other Business:** The Board discussed upcoming cooperative meetings and conferences, the Zone 6 Director vacancy and various equipment and facility updates. Troy was selected as the voting delegate for the Basin Annual Meeting, with Hadley as alternate.

Following executive session, the Board approved the staff wage increase and agreed to begin the interview process for the Zone 6 Director vacancy.

Next Board Meeting – August 18, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

LACREEK ELECTRIC

USPS No. 018-912)

Board of Directors
Brent Ireland - President
Troy Kuxhaus - Vice President
Cole Lange - Secretary
Scott Larson - Treasurer
Hadley Livermont . Michel Melvin
Angie Rascher . Wade Risse . Tom Schlack
Marion Schultz . Jerry Sharp . Wesley Schmidt . Connie Whirlwind Horse

Management Staff
Josh Fanning - General Manager
Mike Pisha - Operations Manager
Sherry Bakley - Work Order/Staff Assistant
Kasi Harris - Finance Manager
Jessica Cook - Member Service/IT
Ashley Turgeon - Administrative Assistant

Office Personnel
Member Service Representative:
Lisa Jensen . Tawnni Risse
Billing/Member Service Representative:
Terri Gregg . Katrina Fish
Right of Way Specialist:
Amy Pisha
Accountant:
Cody Larson

Operations Personnel
Jesse Byerley - Line Foreman
Journeyman Lineman:
Tee Allen . Jordon Bakley . Les Cuny . Kody Hagen . Matthew Kruid . Lonny Lesmeister Garrett Metzinger . Aaron Risse . Trace Scott Damon Wangerin
Apprentice Lineman:
Burke Beer . Spencer Morrison . Ryan Porch Chayson Schofield
Ryan Pettit - Staking Specialist
Henry Johnson - Warehouseman
Justin Smokov - Maintenance Man

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SAFETY IS ALWAYS IN SEASON

Fall hunting is a core memory treasured by many in South Dakota. It's a family and friend tradition that should be kept safe. This is your caring reminder to stay safe and enjoy a great hunt this season.

Simple Safety Rules for All Hunters

- Watch for posted warning signs and stay clear of electrical equipment.
- Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- Know where power lines and equipment are located on the land you hunt.
- Be careful in wooded areas where power lines may not be easy to see.
- Do not place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles; energized lines can shock or kill you.
- Do not place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment; they can block lines and create hazards for crews.

Pheasant hunting often takes place in open fields with hedgerows and grassy strips, while dove hunting centers on fast, aerial crossings across agricultural landscapes. In both scenarios, lines may be hidden by trees or tall grass, especially near field edges and canal banks. Staying alert in these transition zones reduces the risk of an accidental encounter with electrical infrastructure.

Practical Rules for Pheasant and Dove Hunts

- Plan ahead: Check maps or ask landowners where lines and equipment are located.
- Keep a safe distance: Stay away from overhead and buried lines near fields and edges.
- Hunt with a partner: A second person can help spot hazards.
- Speak up about hazards: If you see lines or equipment, treat it as a hazard and avoid the area.
- Follow rules: Respect any posted electrical safety warnings or access restrictions.
- Share safety: Tell fellow hunters and guests about these tips.

Why These Safety Tips Matter

Power lines conduct large amounts of electricity and contact with lines or equipment can cause serious injury or death. Maintaining distance, avoiding contact with poles or lines, and not placing gear on equipment are effective practices that protect you, your hunting partners, and the line workers who keep power on.

Your electric cooperative remains committed to safe hunting. We encourage members to stay informed about local electrical safety rules and to know line locations on the lands they hunt. If you encounter hazards, report them right away so they can be addressed. Sharing these safety practices help create a culture of safety that benefits everyone.





"Don't dig or fly kites by wires!"

Seth Raak, age 7

Seth cautions readers to not dig or fly kites around power lines. That is great advice, Seth! Thank you! Seth's parents are Nathaniel and Katie Raak, members of Central 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.

Let's Eat CAKE



Picture by Elena Veselova and Shutterstock.

SWEDISH PANCAKES

Ingredients:

1.5 cups flour, sifted
3 tbsps. sugar
1/2 tsp. salt
3 eggs
2 cups milk
2 tbsps. butter, melted

Method

Sift together flour, sugar and salt. Beat in 3 eggs until thick and piled softly. Beat in milk and butter until blended.
Lightly grease griddle with butter. For each pancake, spoon about 1 tbsp. of batter on skillet. Cook over medium heat until lightly brown on each side.

Lois J. Larson
Clay-Union Electric

CREAM CHEESE CUPCAKES

Ingredients:

1 box chocolate cake mix, prepared
1 (8 oz.) package cream cheese
1/3 cup sugar
1 egg
Dash of salt
1 (6 oz.) package chocolate chips
1 can cream cheese frosting

Method

Mix cake mix according to package directions. Fill cupcake liners 1/2 full. mix the cream cheese with the sugar. Beat in egg and salt, then add chocolate chips. Drop a teaspoonful of cream cheese mixture into each cupcake. Bake as directed on package. Frost with cream cheese frosting when cool.

Elaine Rieck
Southeastern Electric

CHOCOLATE ZUCCHINI CAKE

Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
2 tsps. baking soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. espresso powder (optional)
1/2 tsp. salt
1 cup canola or vegetable oil
1 cup granulated sugar
3/4 cup brown sugar, packed
4 large eggs, room temperature
1/3 cup sour cream or Greek yogurt, room temperature
2 tsps. vanilla
3 cups shredded zucchini (about 3 medium)
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Method

Preheat oven to 350˚F. Grease two 9x2 inch cake pans (make sure they're at least 2 inches high or one bundt pan)
Whisk the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder, espresso powder (if using) and salt together in a large bowl.
In another large bowl using a handheld or stand mixer, beat the oil, granulated sugar, brown sugar, eggs, sour cream, vanilla and zucchini together until combined.
Pour dry ingredients into the wet ingredients and beat on medium speed until completely combined. Beat in chocolate chips. Batter will be thick.
Pour batter evenly into cake pans. Bake for around 25-32 minutes for round pans; 45 minutes for bundt pans or 9x13 pan; 18-22 minutes for cupcakes (24-30 cupcakes). To test doneness, insert a toothpick into the center of cake. If it comes out clean, it is done.

Ginny Jensen
Sioux Valley Energy

RECIPE CORRECTION
THE BEST APPLE CRISP

Ingredients:

6 cups sliced apples
1 1/2 cups white sugar
1 tsp. cinnamon
6 tbsp. flour

Topping
(makes enough for two pans)

2 cups flour
2 cups brown sugar
2 cups soft butter
1 tsp. baking powder
3 cups oatmeal

Method

Mix ingredients in a bowl and place in a 9x12 glass baking dish. Mix topping ingredients together until crumbly and sprinkle over apple mixture. Don't pack.
Bake at 350 F for 1 hour or until apples are done.

Ginny Jensen
Sioux Valley Energy

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 2026. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

TIPS TO SEAL DUCTWORK FOR SAVINGS



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services Group

If you live in a home with a forced air furnace, the biggest energy waster may be out of sight. Improve your home's efficiency and comfort by repairing and sealing ductwork.

Around 20% to 30% of the air you pay to heat or cool is lost through leaks, holes or poorly installed ductwork in the average home, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This results in wasted energy and uncomfortable homes, regardless of the thermostat setting.

Properly sealing ducts can reduce wasted energy by delivering conditioned air where you want it inside the home. If you have a room that is cold in winter and hot in summer, the culprit might be a leaky or disconnected duct.

Duct sealing also helps with indoor air quality. Leaking return ducts can pull air from the spaces they run through, such as attics and crawl spaces. You don't want to breathe in dirt, dust and insulation. If you have gas appliances, such as a gas water heater, dryer or furnace, leaking return ducts can inadvertently cause backdraft, introducing combustion gases back into the home instead of outdoors where they belong.

You can seal ducts yourself or hire a professional. For a do-it-yourself approach, start with a visual inspection to determine your duct type. Most homes have flexible or metal ducts.

Metal ductwork comes in various shapes and sizes, including round and rectangular, and with various options for turns and connections. Ducts should be insulated when they run through unconditioned spaces, such as crawl spaces, attics and garages. If your metal ducts are insulated, you must remove the insulation to properly seal them, then reinsulate.

Flexible ducts typically have an inner and outer layer with insulation in between. The inner layer is made of bendable plastic reinforced with wire, like a stretched-out Slinky covered in plastic. The outer layer holds the insulation in place. The inner liner in flexible ducts can become brittle over time, cracking easily and causing leaks. If your inner liner is in bad shape, replace the flexible duct.

Check for any obvious disconnections, gaps, extra bends or sagging ducts. Improve airflow by using short, straight, taut runs. Avoid sags and excess turns.

Metal ductwork should be fastened together at each joint using sheet metal screws. Make sure your ducts are properly supported to keep the joints from separating over time.

For flexible ducts, use Panduit straps. These are heavy-duty nylon zip ties that offer long-term durability and a tensioning tool specifically designed to tighten them.

When it comes to sealing ducts, use products designed for the job. Seal every joint and seam using duct-sealing mastic – a thick paste that can be applied with a paintbrush or gloved hand. When it dries, mastic creates a flexible, airtight seal, eliminating duct leakage. Use mesh tape to bridge larger gaps before applying mastic. Remove register covers inside the home to seal the joints and seams there. You also want a good seal where the duct meets drywall or flooring.

In easier-to-reach areas, you can opt to use UL-listed foil-backed tape designed for ductwork.

Do not use duct tape. Fluctuations in temperature cause the adhesive to fail.

Duct sealing is messy, so make sure to protect yourself and your home. Use drop cloths to protect flooring. Metal tape and the edges of metal ducts are sharp, so put on coated work or garden gloves underneath nitrile or latex disposable gloves. To protect your arms, wear a long-sleeve shirt tucked into your gloves or a long sock with the toes cut out.

After air sealing, have an HVAC professional test the airflow during your next annual maintenance visit.

If you don't feel comfortable getting your hands dirty, hire a professional. Most companies that install ductwork or heating and cooling systems can also seal ducts.

Sealing your ductwork gives you peace of mind that your home is not wasting energy or introducing unhealthy air into your living space.

THE WORLD'S LARGEST PHEASANT

Co-op Director Recalls Fixing Up Huron Landmark

Jacob Boyko
jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

In east-central South Dakota, a roadside monument pays homage to one of the region's largest economic drivers: the ring-necked pheasant.

Towering 40 feet above U.S. Highway 14, the "World's Largest Pheasant" has watched over Huron since 1959, when it was built to welcome pheasant hunters to the James River Valley.

In the nearly 70 years since the pheasant was first perched at the Dakota Inn, it has become a South Dakota landmark, attracting visitors from across the country.



Schaun Schnathorst

"It's iconic," explained Schaun Schnathorst, assistant engineer for the City of Huron and director for Dakota Energy Cooperative. "It's in travel guides; it's definitely a destination spot. There's always people stopping to take photos of it."

Schnathorst witnessed the bird's popularity firsthand in 2011, when he and his brother, Bob Carlson, were commissioned to restore the gargantuan fiberglass pheasant to its 1950s glory.

"The thing is 28 feet tall, and it's on top of a 12-foot-tall building, so it's 40 feet tall at the very top of the pheasant's head," Schnathorst said. "For a guy hanging out [of the basket of a bucket truck] with a paint gun trying to paint stuff, it wasn't very fun. There were times I had to open the door of the basket and pretty much lay on the bottom and paint."

The pheasant's survival through nearly seven decades of South Dakota weather is a testament to its construction. Its body was built with steel mesh welded to supports, while massive steel rods inside its legs extend deep into the ground to keep it upright in the wind.

"It got hit by lightning at some point in time, and when I went to restore its head, it had a giant chunk of concrete blown out of it," Schnathorst recalled.

The weeks-long restoration presented several other challenges.

"Way back in the day … people would go by during hunting season and shoot it with a shotgun when they were drunk in the middle of the night," Schnathorst continued. "There were three arrows sticking out of it."



An access door beneath the pheasant had also allowed area pigeons to shelter inside for years, turning the roadside sculpture into their own avian temple.

"The fecal matter was rotting out the bottom of the fiberglass," Schnathorst said, recalling the dismal condition inside the bird.

Luckily, the damage was repairable. Schnathorst installed a one-way door to evict the squatting pigeons and replaced several sections of fiberglass.

When it came time to paint, Schnathorst said the bird's back was the hardest area to reach from his lift, requiring constant repositioning and leaning out of the lift's basket.

"You just really couldn't get that close to it," he said. "But the scariest part is the head. When there's any kind of wind at all, it's moving and you're moving too, and it isn't always at the same pace!"

Schnathorst's work on larger-than-life animals extends beyond Huron's giant pheasant, having repainted Prostrollo Auto Mall's iconic bison statues at the dealerships in Huron and Madison.

"I had two car trailers, one statue on each trailer," he chuckled. "That was really cool living out in the country and having these two giant buffaloes in my yard. It was quite a conversation starter until we got them done!"

MORE PHEASANT FACTS

- The pheasant is 28 feet tall (on a 12-foot-tall roof) and measures 40 feet long from its beak to tail.
- The pheasant weighs more than 22 tons.
- Sculptor RF Jacobs of Gooding, Idaho, constructed the pheasant at a cost of about $23,000.
- The pheasant was dedicated October 18, 1959, and christened by South Dakota Gov. Joe Foss.
- Other South Dakota communities including Gregory, Redfield, Brookings, and Chamberlain also host their own larger-than-life pheasants.



PICK OF THE PATCH

Lucas Hartshorn, owner of Lil' Harvester's Pumpkin Patch, and his family opening the patch for last year's fall season.
Photo submitted by Lucas Hartshorn

Frank Turner
frank.turner@sdrea.coop

South Dakota Pumpkin Patches Offer Plenty of Reasons to Get Outside this Fall

Cooler air, changing leaves and the search for the perfect pumpkin all mark the arrival of the autumn season. Across South Dakota, fall weekends bring families to farms and orchards for corn mazes, apple picking and hayrides.

But putting together a few weeks of fall fun takes months of work behind the scenes.

Pumpkin patches and orchards are preparing to welcome visitors for another season of pumpkins, games and family traditions.

Country Apple Orchard – Harrisburg, S.D.

By the time visitors arrive at Country Apple Orchard near Harrisburg, owner Greg Jones and his crew have already brought in three semi loads of straw bales and about 6,000 bushels of corn.

It's all part of preparing for a fall season that lasts just a couple of months but requires work throughout the year.

"The property is kind of a full-time, year-round job," Jones said.

The orchard has been around for more than 30 years, and Jones is six years into owning the operation. Since taking over, he has expanded the pumpkin patches and added many of the attractions that now make up the orchard's fall festival.

The season opens Sept. 4 and runs through October, beginning with apple picking in September before pumpkins take center stage in October. Weekend festivities include zip lines, apple cannons, hay bale mazes, corn mazes, corn pits and, new this year, fresh-cut flowers.

Country Apple Orchard is also a member of Southeastern Electric Cooperative, which helps power the operation through the busy fall season. Keeping everything running takes about 60 seasonal employees. Once the crowds disappear, that workforce drops to Jones and one other worker.

The effort appears to keep families coming back.

"They love coming out and they come out multiple times," Jones said, adding that some families with season passes



Pumpkins grow in the field at Lil' Harvester's Pumpkin Patch near Rapid City.
Photo submitted by Lucas Hartshorn

return nearly every weekend throughout the season.

Mazing Acres – Yankton, S.D.

What started as a small family project has grown into roughly 35 acres of fall festivities outside Yankton.

Scott and Molly Nedved opened Mazing Acres with their family in 2020. At the time, the idea was to create a small hobby farm that could teach their children the value of hard work while giving the community something new to enjoy.

"It's grown more than we thought it would," Molly laughed.

Today, Mazing Acres, a member of Bon Homme Yankton Electric Association, includes six acres of pumpkins, a five-acre corn maze, a flower patch and several attractions. Visitors can take a hayrack ride, watch pig races, play in the corn pit or try the apple cannons.

The corn maze, sponsored by First Dakota National Bank, changes design each year. For 2026, the design celebrates the nation's 250th anniversary.

Although the festival lasts only several weekends, planning starts almost as soon as the previous season ends. The family reviews what worked, attends industry conferences and selects the next year's pumpkin varieties in late fall. By August, Scott said preparing the farm becomes "an all-day affair every day until we open."



Visitors of all ages can find something to enjoy at Mazing Acres near Yankton, including the farm's giant slides.
Photo submitted by Molly Nedved



A family poses for a photo in the giant pumpkin chair at Mazing Acres.
Photo submitted by Molly Nedved

Visitors will notice a few changes this year. Saturday hours are being extended until 8 p.m., allowing families to experience the farm after dark, and a new tiny-town area will feature themed playhouses for younger children.

Mazing Acres opens Sept. 19 and runs through Halloween.

"We want to be something for every age," Molly said. "Not just for the kids."

Lil' Harvester's Pumpkin Patch – Rapid City, S.D.

At Lil' Harvester's Pumpkin Patch south of Rapid City, the Hartshorn family's fall tradition started in 2013 with pumpkins planted by hand.

Since then, owner Lucas Hartshorn said the patch has grown to about 11 acres.

Hartshorn started the pumpkin patch with his parents, Lyle and Donna, after his father retired. The family wanted a way to keep farming while creating an event they could enjoy with their children.

"We were looking for something to do with the kids in the fall," Hartshorn said.

At the time, pumpkin patches were harder to find around Rapid City. After visiting one themselves, the family decided they could create a similar experience on their own farm.

Each year brought something new. Planting pumpkins by hand eventually gave way to a planter, while the patch grew to include a petting zoo, bounce houses, wagon rides, a sandbox and other activities.

Lil' Harvester's, a member of Black Hills Electric Cooperative, also opens during the week for school field trips, where students get a closer look at agriculture. Hartshorn said demonstrations may focus on pumpkins or the differences between sweet corn, field corn and popcorn, including how each is grown. For Hartshorn, that mix of farming, education and family time remains at the heart of the patch.

"They get to come out to the farm and learn something," Hartshorn said.

Across South Dakota, there are several more pumpkin patches and fall festivities similar to those put on by Country Apple Orchard, Mazing Acres and Lil' Harvester's Pumpkin Patch. Whether it's a small hobby farm or a dedicated agritourism operation, each one offers its own take on fall traditions that continue to draw families back year after year.

Lacreek is Seeking Members

An electric cooperative operates on an at-cost basis by annually allocating to each member, based upon the member's purchase of electricity, operating revenue remaining at the end of the year; later, as financial condition permits, these allocated amounts – capital credits – are retired. Capital credits represent the most significant source of equity for Lacreek. Since a cooperative's members are also the people the co-op serves, capital credits reflect each member's ownership in, and contribution of capital to, the cooperative. This differs from dividends investor-owned utilities pay shareholders, who may or may not be customers of the utility. Each year, the Lacreek board of directors makes a decision on whether to retire capital credits based on the financial health of the cooperative. During some years, the co-op may experience high growth in the number of new accounts, or severe storms may result in the need to spend additional funds to repair lines. These and other events might increase costs and decrease member equity, causing the board not to retire capital credits. For this reason, Lacreek's ability to retire capital credits reflects the cooperative's strength and financial stability. The board alone decides whether to retire capital credits.

Some of the checks issued in 2020 have not been claimed. If you know any of the members listed below and have the ability to contac them, please have them call our office or if you see your name on this list, please contact us at 605-685-6581.

A T & T BOSG
Adams, Larry
Aldrich, M Kathryn
Arapahoe, Wilferd
Badlands Ag Spraying
Barlow, Cheryl D
Barrett, Christine
Bartlett, David
Beane, Lou
Belile, Don Sr
Benjamin, Franklin J
Berry, Loriann
Bettelyoun, Maxine
Betts, Maxine
Big Crow, Debra
Black Elk, Steven
Bracha, Robert
Brave Bird, Cleveland
Britton, James Jr
Brown, David
Brown, Fred Sr
Budar, Valerie
Burch, Lewis
Cangleska Inc
Conroy, Ben
Cottier, Linda S
Cournoyer, Kimberly
Crazy Bear, Larry
Crossett, Clay
Crow Good Voice Elk, Eugene W Jr.
Crump, William
Culp, John
Curry, Robert
Cutt, Andrew Jr
Daniels, Natalie
De Boer, Carol
Deering, Carolyn
Dithmer Bros
Doppler, John
Drechsler, Ellen
Dupree, Richard
Engel, David L
Farmer, Shirley K
Ferguson, Francis D
First Body Jesus Christ Church-Norris
Fischer, Jane
Froiland, Eric
Gardner, Vernon
Gauer, Troy
Gay, Royce
George, Lisa
Golis, Aleen
Gomez, Hector C
Good Voice Elk, Frank Jr
Gunsalus, Wade
Hacker, Robert
Hale, Warren
Harding, David
Hartley, George
Heitz, Robbie
Heltzel, Mark
Herman, Frances J
Hernandez, Ben R
Herzog, Donald
High Hawk, Melvin
High Horse, Marge
Horse, Ron
Hoskins, Arlan
Jacobs, Don T
Janis, Christine
Janis, Cleve R
Jim, Verna M
Johnson, Amy
Jones, Roberta
Jordan, Jacque
Kamerzell, Susan
Keating, Bill
Keeler, Norman J
Kills Back, Julie A
Kills Enemy, Gerald R
Knudson, Lavern E
Kramp, Kathrine
Kriz, Emmy G
Kunkel, Ron
Lakota Wesleyan Mission
Landwer, Stace J
Laplante, Kodi
Lara, Angela
Larsen, Mervrene A
Lasalle, Phalena
Lehman, Donna M
Link, Maynard C
Linn, Bonita B
Little, Stacey
Little Hoop, Peter Jr
Little Moon, Alice
Little Thunder, Gary
Locke, Joy B
Loften, Thomas G
Lone Hill, Darcie
Lyons, Linda
Malewski, Laura
Many Birds, Ann
Marek, Wayne B
Marino, Joseph
Marshall, Cassidy
Marshall, Fred L
Martin, Danny C
Martin, Nancy R
Martinez, James
Martinson, Judy
Maupin, Elizabeth
McCroskey, Dan
McCloskey, William

McCowan, Kathy
McGrady, Tim
McLaughlin, Gerald
Means, Cecil R II
Menard, Kristine
Menzel, Richard P
Merritt, Ruth A
Meyers, Leigh
Miller, Gary L
Miller, Mathew G
Mitchell, Rosalie
Mittleider, George
Miyasato, Mona M
Mogan Ranch
Morgan, Robert R
Morris, Giles
Morrison, Orlando B
Morton, Kenneth D
Mueller, Ronald
Mullins, Molly
Neikirk, David E
Neiss, Tamera A
Neufeld, Katherine H
O-KOLA Kiciye O-Tipi
Oglala Baptist Mission
Olander Construction
Osterbur, Jerriegh
Overby, Charles B
Page, Robert
Palacio, Pansy
Park, Frank D
Pawnee Leggins, Joseph
Peck, Pamela J
Perkins, Lorena
Phelps, Lisa
Phipps, Nancy
Pichotta, Sharon
Pine Ridge Ambulance
Pine Ridge Christian Academy
Pine Ridge Ministries
Pionk, Deb
Porcupine Clinic
Pourier, Justin J
Price, Jerry
Priest, Juanita L
Prust, Daniel W
Pumpkin Seed, Amanda
QUEST
Queverue, Arlette
Quiver, Clayton A
Rand, Wendy
Ray, Jim
Red Eyes, Sprena
Rice, Joe
Richards, Leona M
Richardson, Debra
Robin Son, Terry D
Robinson, Ann J
Rodriquez, Andy
Roon, Bradley S
Ross, Beverly M
Rouillard, Darlene F
Roupe, Gilbert
Roy, Gerald Jr
Runnels, Nancy L
Running, Beatrice
Ruona, Johanna
Rystrom, Jenny L
Sacred Heart Church/Norris
Sacred Heart Church/Rosebud
Salahuddin, Naveed
Samson, Marilyn
Samuel, Elizbeth
Sanchez, Jane C
Sasse, Carl W Jr
Schneider, Carol
Schneider-Marshall, Mary Kay
Schultz, Steve
Schulz, William
Schwartz, Steven T
Scoresby, Paul H
Scouts Enemy, Buck
Semnole, Rochelle
Severson, Daniel
Shangreaux, Orville Jr
Shaving, Irene
Shields, Bernadine
Siebrasse, Pam
Simpson, David
Skelton, Kathy
Smith, Michael C
Solvie, Olaf
Sorensen, Luann M
Spain, Thomas L
Spann, Curtis D
Spider, Louise
St. Peter's Episc Church/Oglala
Standing Bear, Harold
Standing Soldier, Sharon
Stanley, Janelle
Star, Elliot
Stengle, James B
Stephen, Ellen
Stoltenberg, Lora
Street, Parke C
Tashman, Brett
Thomas, Rudi L
Thompson, Fred
Thompson, Helen R
Thunder Hawk, Elizabeth
Thunder Hawk, Homer T
Treehaven School
Truijillo, Margaret
Tumblin, William W
Tuttle, Robert
Two Eagle, George C Sr
Two Two, Elmer
Valandra, Shane
Valentine, David
Villarreal, Lisa
Villarreal, Lucette
Wachob, Robert T
Wainman, Vanice M
Walters, James J
Wensel, Patricia
Weslyan Indian Mission
Whidby, Amanda
White, Lee E
White, James
White Clay Ambulance
Wiedmann, Terry
Williams, Lorna
Wittig, Sandra
Woeppel, Mary L
Wright, Bill
Wright, Stanley
Yanke, James
Young, Linda
Zeller, Doug
Zimiga, Barbara
Zimmer, John





LOST BENEATH OAHE

The Rise, Fall and Disappearance of a South Dakota Ghost Town

The mouth of Swan Creek on Lake Oahe where the ghost town of LeBeau resides under the waves. *Photo by Frank Turner*

Frank Turner
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Beneath the waves of Lake Oahe lies more than dead trees and walleye. Just below the surface near Akaska sit the remnants of LeBeau, an early 1900s railroad town once filled with immense promise and prosperity, whose story is worthy of its own Wild West feature film.

For years, Caroline Thorsen has collected the history of her great-grandfather, Antoine Le Beau, and the town that bore his name. Through Thorsen's collection and research by railroad historian Don Hofsommer in "A Promise Broken: LeBeau and the Railroad," we can dive beneath the waters of Lake Oahe and dredge up the story of LeBeau's dramatic rise and fall.

A French Fur Trader

The story of the ghost town of LeBeau begins with Antoine Le Beau Sr., a French fur trader whose journey in the mid-1800s took him from France to Quebec, Canada, then to St. Louis, Missouri and eventually up the Missouri River to what is now South Dakota.

"As I unfortunately did not know [Antoine], I hope he is remembered as being a brave gentleman who crossed the ocean from France to come to America and eventually become friends with the Native Americans, married in Native Tradition," said Thorsen, Le Beau's great-granddaughter.

The woman Antoine married was Mary Little Thunder, a member of the Two Kettle Band of Sioux. Antoine himself was later one of several Frenchmen adopted into the Sioux Tribe at a Great Sioux Council, where he was given the name "Ogless," or "Red Shirt."

Le Beau worked with the American Fur Company before establishing a trading post along the Missouri River near present-day Akaska. The post became the foundation of a small town that would eventually bear his name and become a brief, yet bright, gateway to the West.

The Railroad

By the time the railroad arrived, Antoine Le Beau Sr. was gone, but the town was quickly gaining the reputation of a small metropolis. In 1907, the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railway (M&StL) reached LeBeau, connecting the small Missouri River settlement to Watertown and markets farther east.

"As LeBeau prospered, so did the M&StL's westernmost extension; as LeBeau withered, so did its railroad," Hofsommer writes.

Cattle companies from Texas had taken notice of both LeBeau and the grasslands west of the Missouri. Once they learned cattle thrived west of the river, they began moving large herds into the region. Through its railroad, LeBeau offered those ranchers a new route to market.

The next trick was getting the cattle across the river. On the west side of the Missouri, large holding pens could accommodate as many as 3,500 animals. From there, cattle crossed the river aboard the Scotty Philip, a steam-powered ferry. Once across, they could be loaded directly onto eastbound rail cars.

In 1908, roughly 24,000 cattle passed through LeBeau on their way to and from the West River ranges, representing about $1 million in livestock at the time. The feat helped cement the town's place as a major cattle-shipping point on the Missouri.

A Bustling Town

By the end of the season, LeBeau featured two banks, a newspaper, a drugstore, a general store and a local saloon. The growing town also boasted two lumberyards, a grain elevator and a livery, along with prominent businesses like the Idle Hour billiard and pool parlor, the Hotel LeBeau and Arcade Hotel. For entertainment, residents could even catch a show at Zimmer's Opera House.

As the town grew, M&StL officials planned to continue the rail line west of the



French fur trapper Antoine Le Beau Sr. *Photo submitted by Caroline Thorsen*

Missouri by building a bridge across the Missouri, hinting at a long expansion all the way to the West Coast. The excitement only reinforced the idea that LeBeau was destined to become the gate to the west.

The buzz captured the attention of Murdo MacKenzie, general manager of the Matador Land and Cattle Company, and his wealthy son, Dode. Described as a likable and fine young man – while sober – Dode moved to LeBeau in his early 20s to oversee Matador's South Dakota operations.

A Questionable Killing

At the end of the 1909 shipping season, Dode MacKenzie began frequenting LeBeau's saloons. On Dec. 11, he was shot and killed by Bud Stephens, who was tending the bar that morning at Phil DuFran's saloon.

Local accounts of what happened that day – and of Dode MacKenzie's character – differ greatly. One local official described MacKenzie as a stand-up individual, while another local woman said he was known to shoot behind the heels of women in the town when "spirits took him."

Exactly what happened on Dec. 11 will never be known, but according to the version later presented by Stephens' defense at trial, MacKenzie became furious when Stephens failed to hear him order a drink. Rebuffed, MacKenzie crossed the street to purchase what he believed were .45-caliber shells, loaded his gun, walked back, pointed it at Stephens and pulled the trigger twice. As the story goes, MacKenzie had accidentally purchased .38-caliber shells, which failed to fire and instead plopped onto the floor. It was then that Stephens reached for his gun and began firing, killing the young MacKenzie.



The paddle-wheeler Scotty Philip loads cattle at LeBeau, S.D., to be fattened on grasslands west of the Missouri River. For about three years, LeBeau was one of the Northwest's most important cattle-shipping towns.
Photo courtesy of the South Dakota Historical Society

A Dying Town

The trial resulted in Stephens' acquittal, drawing the ire of Dode MacKenzie's father and the Matador Cattle Company. The company effectively boycotted LeBeau, and no Matador cattle ever entered the town again.

Within months of the trial, a suspicious fire made matters worse. Although fires weren't uncommon in the Wild West, townsfolk discovered that the fire hose, telephone and telegraph lines had all been cut prior to the fire. No arsonist was ever caught.

The bad luck didn't stop there. A competing rail line to the north completed a bridge across the Missouri at Mobridge, undercutting LeBeau's stream of West River cattle. By 1924, M&StL abandoned the town, tearing out its segment of rail line. Within a year, the post office closed.

Beneath Lake Oahe

LeBeau had been a ghost town for decades when Lake Oahe came for what was left.

Construction of Oahe Dam near Pierre began in 1948 as part of a massive federal effort to control flooding and generate hydroelectric power along the Missouri River. In August 1958, the river was closed at the dam and the newly created reservoir began to fill.

As the water rose, it eventually covered the old LeBeau townsite near the mouth of Swan Creek. The empty foundations, cellar holes and remnants of the once-bustling railroad town disappeared beneath Lake Oahe. Unlike most ghost towns in South Dakota that faded away with time, LeBeau vanished beneath the Missouri.



A crowd gathers around a band near the railroad in LeBeau, S.D., with the depot and Missouri River visible in the distance. About a year after this photo was taken, the town installed 10-foot-wide concrete sidewalks along Main Street.
Photo courtesy of the South Dakota Historical Society.



A PRETTY SWEET IDEA

Doland Teen Finds Success as Ice Cream Entrepreneur

Jacob Boyko
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Noah Felderman has long enjoyed staying at his grandparents' cabin at Lake Poinsett, north of Arlington, S.D. But during the summer of 2020, the 12-year-old faced a dilemma many kids did during the COVID-19 era.

What is there to do today?

"I was there every weekend – almost every day – and people were talking about ice cream," Noah said. "I thought, 'Hey, I could try to make something out of this.'"

After drawing up a business plan with his grandparents and borrowing their orange side-by-side, Noah drove – or, rather, had an adult drive him – around to sell ice cream bars out of a small chest freezer.

"He was 12 years old and not able to drive, so this was a family event," Noah's dad, Chad, said with a chuckle.

Driving to different campgrounds and neighborhoods around the lake, Noah's business – Feldy's Ice Cream – became a hit with residents, cabin owners, and weekend campers.

The next summer, hoping to keep the momentum going, 13-year-old Noah found and purchased a retired school bus.

"We found a really good deal – this bus needed some work just to get going and be operational so that's how we snagged it," Noah explained. The Feldermans completely overhauled the bus to turn it into a fully-equipped ice cream truck, even giving it a custom orange paint job to craft a recognizable brand and pay homage to his grandparents' orange side-by-side that started it all.

Eighteen-year-old Noah Felderman (right) started his own ice cream business in 2020. Noah's dad, Chad Felderman (left), is the CEO of Dakota Energy Cooperative in Huron.
Photo by Jacob Boyko

That was the summer things really started to take off for Feldy's Ice Cream.

"I called the State of South Dakota asking about tax law, and they said they didn't have time for prank calls," Noah laughed.



Feldy's Ice Cream serves stocks many flavors – vanilla, caramel, raspberry chip, Oreo, and classic mint chocolate chip, to name a few.
Photo by Jacob Boyko

Covering more ground in the bus than he could with the side-by-side, the determined teenager became a familiar face and started building connections in the Lake Poinsett area.

"Someone said if I ever want to do an event, I could come cater the staff at the Madison hospital," Noah recalled. "So that's what I went out and did."

Word spread quickly. After Madison Regional Health, Noah visited Prairie Lakes Hospital in Watertown, then Huron Regional Medical Center.

He continued, "Once we were there, we served staff that were having their own private events, like weddings, so then they'd reach out to us and see if we'd want to cater their wedding. It just kind of kept growing."

As demand for ice cream grew, Noah purchased a small building at Lake Poinsett to open a permanent ice cream shop and also allow them the space to expand their offerings, serving Saturday morning waffle breakfasts and statewide favorites like Black Hills Bagels and Flyboy Donuts.

Six years since starting the business, Feldy's Ice Cream has become a seven-days-per-week summer commitment for Noah. Today, the 18-year-old operates an ice cream truck, ice cream trailer and the Lake Poinsett location.

For staffing, Noah turned to area high schools.

"We hit hard at the local schools – Castlewood, Estelline, Arlington, Hamlin, Watertown, Brookings," Noah recalled. "We'd go to the school, give them some free ice cream coupons, and encourage them to apply for a summer job."

Noah currently employs 17 part-time summer workers.

"I never imagined that (the business) would grow into what I'm doing now on a day-to-day basis," he reflected. "I've learned that you can have a plan, and the plan's not always going to go how you want. A machine will break down, and then you're sitting there fixing it and figuring out how you're going to get to this event on time. You learn to take things as they come."

After graduating this past spring, Noah enrolled at Lake Area Technical College in Watertown to pursue training in law enforcement. He hopes to pair that training with a pilot's license and pursue a career in aviation law enforcement.

But that doesn't mean he's finished with ice cream.

"I'll take it year by year," Noah said. "I don't have any plans to shut down or slow down operation. It's definitely something I'm going to continue doing."

Noah's dad, Chad Felderman, who also serves as CEO at Dakota Energy Cooperative, praised his son's work ethic and thanked the surrounding communities for supporting the business.

"You can't not be proud of Noah," Chad said. "With all of the connections he's made in different communities and businesses, when I introduce myself, I don't introduce myself as Chad – I introduce myself as Noah's dad or Feldy's Ice Cream's dad."



Spink County Sheriff's Deputy Wyatt Anderson visits Feldy's Ice Cream at a stop at the Spink County Courthouse in Redfield.
Photo by Jacob Boyko



Chad assists Noah as he prepares a large order of ice cream cups at Eastern Star retirement home in Redfield.
Photo by Jacob Boyko



Twelve-year-old Noah started his business at Lake Poinsett.
Photo submitted by Chad Felderman



OCT. 31
Yankton's Harvest Halloween
Yankton, SD
www.harvesthalloween.com

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.

OCT. 2-3
Public Ghost Investigation
Fort Sisseton State Park
Langford, SD
605-910-4465

OCT. 3
Pumpkin Train/ SoDak Vendor Showcase
Prairie Village
Madison, SD

OCT. 3
Fall Harvest Farmers Market
9 a.m.
Centennial Park
Hot Springs, SD

OCT. 3-4
The Black Market
Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.,
Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Bldg.
Sioux Falls, SD

OCT. 4
St. Anthony's Fall Bazaar
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Swiss Steak 12-1:30 p.m.
Hoven, SD

OCT. 4
Grace Lutheran Church & Little Brown Church Fundraiser
Meal: 12-1:30 p.m. CDT
Auction: 2 p.m. CDT
Grace Lutheran Church
Hayes, SD
605-567-3559

OCT. 9-11
S.D. Showdown Truck Show
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Viborg, SD
605-940-0087

OCT. 14
Soup & Pie Day & Country Store
4 p.m.-7 p.m.
First Baptist Church
105 N. State St.
Viborg, SD

OCT. 17
Faulkton Area Arts Council Craft Fair
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Faulkton School
Faulkton, SD
605-380-8444

OCT. 17
Fabricadabra
11 a.m.-4 p.m.
Dakota Prairie Quilt Guild
NFAA Easton Yankton Archery Center
Yankton, SD
605-660-1612

OCT. 23
Monster Mash
5-8 p.m.
Box Elder Events Center
Free Event
Box Elder, SD
605-390-9341

OCT. 23
A Night of Laughter & Music
6 p.m.
American Legion Post 15
Sioux Falls, SD
Tickets & Info: 605-336-3470

OCT. 24
Women of Today Craft Fair
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
West Central Becker Center
Hartford, SD
605-359-2049

OCT. 24
United Church of Christ's Annual Soup & Sweets Dinner
4-7 p.m.
105 N 2nd St.
Hermosa, SD
605-503-0843

OCT. 31
Treat Street
Main Street
Milbank, SD

NOV. 7
Fall Fling Craft/Vendor Show
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Dakota Christian School
Corsica, SD

NOV. 14-15
Zonta Holiday Craft & Vendor Show
Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Ramkota Hotel
Pierre, SD

Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.