

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



This year's sunflower crop is expected to be bountiful as market forces have driven up demand and prices

## Sensational Sunflowers

**Sunflower market blooms**

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**Everyone's welcome in the Chislic Circle**

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# Power of Preparation



**Matt Hotzler**  
Manager

With severe weather events that we saw occur this summer, now is a great time to review your preparedness. During a prolonged power outage or another emergency, this means having enough food, water and supplies to last a few days.

In honor of National Preparedness Month in September, I want to remind members of our community about the power of preparation. While you don't have to achieve a "doomsday prepper" level of preparedness, there are several steps you can take to keep you and your family safe.

Even at a modest level, preparation can help reduce stress and anxiety and lessen the impact of an emergency event. Let's get started with the basics.

Here are general guidelines recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help you think about what might be best for you and your families:

- Assemble a grab-and-go disaster kit. Include items like nonperishable food, water (one gallon per person, per day), diapers, batteries, flashlights, prescription medications, first-aid kit, battery-powered radio and phone chargers.
- Develop a plan for communicating with family and friends (i.e., via text, social media, third party, etc.).
- Have some extra cash available; during a power outage, electronic card readers and cash machines may not work.
- Store important documents (birth certificates, property deed, etc.) in a safe place away from home (for example, a bank safe deposit box).
- Keep neighbors and coworkers apprised of your emergency plans.
- Keep your car filled with gas.
- Organize your supplies so they are

together in an easily accessible location that family members know about.

## Caring for vulnerable family members

If you have older family members or those with special needs, make sure they have enough medication and supplies for a few days. If they don't live with you, arrange for a neighbor to check in on them. If a severe weather event is expected, consider having your relative stay with you if feasible, otherwise, call or make contact with them daily. If you have an infant or young children, make certain that you have ample formula, diapers, medication, and other supplies on hand to weather an outage lasting several days or more.

**"Preparation can help reduce stress and anxiety and lessen the impact of an emergency event."**

## Keeping four-legged family members safe

For families with pets, having a plan in place in the event of a prolonged outage or an emergency will help reduce worry and stress especially if you need to decide on the action during an emergency.

- Bring pets indoors at the first sign of a storm or other emergency. Pets can become disoriented and frightened during severe weather and may wander off during an emergency.
- Microchip your pet and ensure the contact information is up to date.
- Store pet medical records on a USB drive or in an easy-to-remember location.
- Create an emergency kit for pets (include shelf-safe food, bottled water, medications, and other supplies).

**COOPERATIVE**

**CONNECTIONS**

**H-D ELECTRIC**

(USPS No. 018-905)

**General Manager:** Matt Hotzler

**Headquarters Employees:**

Annie Aberle – Finance and Administration Manager  
Michelle Prins – Billing Clerk  
Heidi Brewer-Grimlie – Accounting Clerk  
Jami Bolden – Receptionist/Cashier  
Roger Cutshaw – Engineer  
Darren Matthies – Building Property Worker

**Operations:**

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Todd Sprang – Line Foreman  
Line Crew:

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Joe Raml – Lead Lineworker  
Cody Scarrott – Lineworker  
Derek Bille – Lineworker  
Kevin Holida – Lead Lineworker  
Matt Miller – Equipment Operator/  
Mechanic

Joseph Jordan Jr. – Apprentice Lineworker  
Eric Page – Apprentice Lineworker

**Member Services:**

Tom Lundberg – Member Services Manager  
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Brady Krause – Journey Electrician  
Amanda Reese – Apprentice Electrician

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Design assistance by SDREA.

**Power of Preparation, Cont.**

At H-D Electric we care about your safety. Planning for an emergency today can give you more confidence to deal with severe weather and potential outages in the future.

**H-D Electric activities**

We saw substantial damage in both the May 12 and the May 30 storms that rolled through our service territory, but we were able to get everyone restored within a couple of days with the use of only our crews. The storm on May 12 was submitted by Gov. Noem as a disaster for the state and then the President declared it a disaster. This declaration included the counties we serve and allows FEMA funds available to us to assist with repairing the H-D system. After the storms, the H-D Electric member services department was busy helping members with their wire damage and getting electricity back running on their equipment. Those storms created a lot of work for all of those affected. The operations crews are back to putting in new services and working on the line update construction projects completed for the year while the member services department continues work on projects for members on their side of the meter. With the damage caused by the storms, we were thankful that over the last several years we have worked to replace some of our oldest most troublesome lines with new lines. That's one way your cooperative has been getting prepared for various natural disasters. We still have a long way to go but currently, over 57 percent of our lines are now underground – up 34 percent from just 15 years ago. That's nearly 400 miles of underground installed over the last 15 years.

Have a safe month and keep in mind that August marks the beginning of school around the area so be aware of the extra kid activity.

**Employee Spotlight**  
**Noah Reichling – Electrician**  
**Seven Years of Service**

- 1. What do you like most about your job?**  
I enjoy helping members with their electrical needs.
- 2. What motivates you to come to work every day?**  
Above helping our members, what motivates me is being able to solve new problems.
- 3. How would you describe HD in four words or less?**  
Here to serve members.
- 4. Give one advice to someone!**  
Smile, life is short



# Take safety precautions during harvest season

Harvest season brings long, grueling hours in the field, which can make workers weary and prone to neglect safety precautions that can prevent serious or fatal electrical injuries. Every year, an average of 62 farmworkers are electrocuted in the U.S., and many more are injured by shocks.

Farm operators, their family members and farm employees are urged to beware of overhead power lines, to keep farm equipment safely away and to know what to do if accidental contact is made with power lines.

The increasing size of farm equipment, particularly grain tanks on combines that have become higher with extensions, allows operators to come perilously close to overhead power lines over entrances to fields. It is vital to keep equipment safely away from these lines. Maintain a minimum 10-foot radius around electric lines.

Portable augers are the No. 1 cause of electrocution on the farm. Augers being maneuvered by hand around bin sites have caused the deaths of many farmworkers who became the path to ground for electricity when the top of the auger touched overhead power lines. Always retract or lower augers when moving or transporting.

Other equipment commonly involved in power line accidents includes oversized wagons, large combines and other tall equipment.

Harvest is the most likely period for farm-related injury accidents and fatalities. Combines and other equipment loaded onto trailers can contact power lines and cause electrocutions, as can raising the bed of a truck to unload. That's exactly how a 53-year-old Michigan truck driver was tragically killed when he raised the bed of his semitrailer truck while parked beneath a power line at the edge of a field. He was attempting to clean out the bed, and when he touched the truck bed, he became the path to ground for the electricity.

Follow these safety measures:

- Use a spotter when moving tall loads near power lines.
- Inspect farm equipment for transport height and determine clearance with any power lines under which the equipment must pass.
- Make sure everyone knows what to do if accidental contact is made with power lines. These accidents are survivable if the right actions are taken.

## STUDENTS LEARN HOW POWER IS PRODUCED

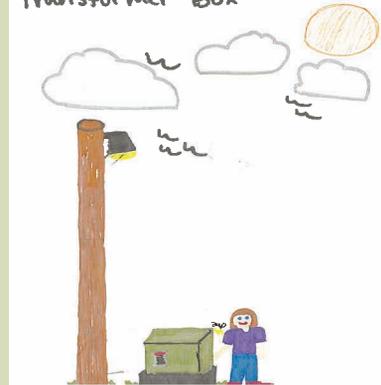
A group of high school students recently gathered together to take a trip and learn how electricity is produced and how it is used to power their homes, farms, appliances and local businesses.

The students traveled to Bismarck, N.D., to tour the power generation facilities of Basin Electric, which supplies electricity across nine states and is one of the largest power producers in the country.

To see a video of this event and learn more about how electric cooperatives serve our members, visit Cooperative Connections Plus by scanning the QR code at right.



Don't Mess With a Transformer Box



## Beware of the green box

### Cambrie Koistinen

Cambrie, age 11, advises electric cooperative members to use caution around pad-mounted transformers, also known as green boxes, because they contain high-voltage power equipment. Cambrie is the child of Lance and Holly Koistinen of Hayti.

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.

# FRESH FROM THE GARDEN

## ZUCCHINI SPINACH CASSEROLE

**Ingredients:**  
 2 lbs. zucchini  
 1 lbs. frozen spinach  
 1 chopped onion  
 4 cloves of garlic  
 5 beaten eggs  
 1/2 cup salad oil  
 1-1/2 cup cracker crumbs (save 1/2 cup for top)  
 1-1/2 cup cheddar cheese (save 1/2 for top)

### METHOD

Cook and drain first four ingredients. Add eggs, salad oil, cracker crumbs and cheddar cheese. Add salt, pepper and parsley to taste. Spread the remaining crumbs and cheese on top. Bake at 350 for 40 minutes.  
**Glenda Morton, Sioux Falls**

## CREAMY CUCUMBER SALAD

**Ingredients:**  
 1 1/2 long English cucumbers cut in half moons  
 1 1/2 lb tomatoes on the vine sliced in segments  
 1/4 cup red onion thinly sliced (optional)  
 3 tbsp dill finely chopped  
 2 small garlic cloves grated  
 1/2 cup sour cream  
 1/2 tsp salt  
 Ground black pepper to taste

### METHOD

In a large bowl, add cucumbers, tomatoes, red onion, dill, garlic, sour cream, salt and pepper. Stir gently from the bottom in the center of the bowl until well combined. Serve salad within next six hours or so.  
**ifoodreal.com**

## CUCUMBER SANDWICHES

**Ingredients:**  
 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened  
 1 pkg. Good Seasons Italian Dressing Mix (dry)  
 1 mini loaf of cocktail rye bread  
 1 cucumber, sliced  
 fresh dill weed, chopped

### METHOD

The night before serving the cucumber sandwiches, mix together the cream cheese and the Good Seasons Italian Dressing Mix. Refrigerate overnight. Shortly before serving, spread some of the cream cheese mixture on a slice of the cocktail rye bread. Top with a slice of cucumber and sprinkle with dill weed.

**Elaine Rieck, Harrisburg**

## CHERI'S SALAD

**Ingredients:**  
 1-1 lb. pkg. veggie spiral noodles  
 2 1/2 c. diced ham  
 1 c. shredded cheddar cheese  
 1 c. chopped celery  
 1 bag frozen peas, thawed

**Dressing:**  
 1/2 c. mayonnaise  
 1/2 c. sour cream  
 1 tbsp. mustard  
 1 tbsp. sweet pickle juice  
 3/4 tsp. onion powder  
 1/3 c. sugar

### METHOD

Cook noodles according to package directions, drain and rinse. Mix ingredients together in a bowl and set aside. Mix until blended and pour over salad. Stir until well blended.

**Jan Antonen, Arlington**

**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 2022. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.**

### Q: I'm a firm believer that saving energy helps the environment as well as the pocketbook. So, how can I help others improve their energy savings at home?



**Miranda Boutelle**  
Efficiency Services  
Group

A: Helping people feels good. Supporting community is sewn into the fabric of your electric co-op, which is guided by the Seven Cooperative Principles that put the needs of members first.

On National Good Neighbor Day, which is Sept. 28, join in the cooperative spirit and help your neighbors, friends and family save at home with these do-it-yourself energy-saving tips.

Tips range in physicality and cost, providing options based on your ability.

#### CHANGE LIGHTBULBS

Prioritize changing lights that are used the most, such as incandescent porch lights left on all night. LEDs use about 75 percent less energy and last up to 25 times longer than incandescent bulbs. Some neighbors can't climb step stools or ladders, so help them out if you are able. Be sure to check for overhead power lines when using ladders outside.

#### SWAP THE FILTER

Furnace filters should be checked regularly and replaced when they are dirty. Simply writing down the dimensions of the furnace filter can help your neighbor, who can pick up a pack of new ones in the store or order online.

If you find a really dirty furnace filter, don't remove it until you have a replacement. Operating your system without a filter allows dirt and dust in the system to go directly to the heating and cooling components, which can damage the system and necessitate costly repairs.

#### OPEN THE DAMPERS

Register dampers allow heated and cooled air to properly circulate throughout the home. If you have a central air heating or cooling system, dampers should be left open. The idea

that closing registers saves energy is a common misconception. If furniture is on top of dampers, move it to a new permanent spot so it does not block air flow.

#### ADJUST THE WATER HEATER

Check the water heater and set it to 120 degrees. Use a kitchen thermometer to test the water temperature. At the faucet nearest the water heater, turn only the hot water on and wait until it gets hot. Let the hot water run into a glass and place a kitchen thermometer in it. Wait until it registers the highest temperature. If the water heater is set too high, you can save energy by lowering the setting.



#### KEEP OUTDOOR UNITS CLEAR

Clean brush and debris from around the air conditioner or heat pump. If leaves or brush pile up around the outdoor unit of a heat pump or air-conditioning system, it can reduce the airflow, making the system work harder than it should. That uses more energy and can reduce the life of the unit.

#### REMOVE THE WINDOW AC

By removing the unit before wintertime, the window can close properly. This prevents heat from escaping and wasting energy. It also keeps the room more comfortable. Window AC units are heavy and awkward. This project is best done with a buddy. Get that person to commit to helping put the unit back next spring.

#### SHARE ENERGY-SAVING PROGRAMS

Information is a great way to help, and it's free. Look into programs your co-op offers and share that information with your neighbor. Don't forget to check the U.S. Department of Energy for federal tax credits for upgrades.

# Wordes works to master complexity of the pipe organ

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

The many pastimes of Rachel Wordes include popular activities such as dance, soccer and volunteer work through her church.

And then there's the pipe organ. Wordes, a native of Clara City and recent graduate of Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, has been on a quest to perfect her musical skills on this arcane instrument since she joined the music program at Dordt.

She received scholarship support in dance and education, but also received a special private scholarship to study the pipe organ because of her proficiency on piano, her passion for music and eagerness to learn. She sat down at the imposing Casavant organ at Dordt and it was love at first listen.

Wordes read a history of the vaunted Casavant organ written by Dr. Joan Ringerwole, who described it as having voice and breath and taking on the qualities of a living being. The massive organ has 2,865 pipes, 57 ranks, 37 stops and 32 pedals.

"The appeal to me is that the pipe organ is like a palette you can use to paint a musical picture," Wordes said. "Every one is different and has its own unique tone and timbre."

Throughout her college career, Wordes taught piano and pipe organ lessons, led summer music camps, participated in recitals and distinguished herself in her ability to play and teach.



Rachel Wordes plays an organ at St. Bavorkerk in Haarlem, Netherlands. The instrument was built in the early 1700s and was played by Handel and Mozart.

During two weeks last spring, she was selected to take part in a pipe organ tour across the Netherlands. She has also traveled with her fellow Dordt College students and faculty to Europe for the opportunity to play 24 famous and historic pipe organs.

"The Netherlands trip was remarkable," she said. "We got to play two or three pipe organs a day. We had some pieces picked out and played in the style represented during the time the organ was made, going all the way back to the 1300s. It was kind of like driving a car that's not yours. They're all different with

different tones, temperaments, character and personality. I learned a lot."

Knowledge is something Wordes is more than eager to share. In 2019, she spent the summer teaching music in La Entrada, Honduras. During the first five months of 2022, Wordes worked with students in Managua, Nicaragua, and recently returned there with a year-long commitment to teach English and music at a local private school.

Her career goal is to teach English as a Second Language (ESL).

"I love to teach and watch students expand their skills," she said.



# Sunflower commodity prices are making farmers smile

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

It's hard to keep from smiling when you're driving past a field of golden sunflowers in full bloom during the late summer months.

Wall Drug billboards, old red barns and shiny grain bins are no match for the attention of motorists along I-90 when the sunflowers are bursting forth in all their spectacular yellow splendor stretching far into the horizon.

The subject of many aerial and terrestrial photographers across the region, sunflowers have a special appeal as they grow tall in the field and seem to greet the day leaning forward with a positive energy that exudes joy and optimism.

The current sunflower commodity market certainly has given farmers a reason to smile. South Dakota farmers raised nearly 600,000 acres and more than 1 billion pounds of sunflowers

last year, ranking second only to North Dakota for sunflower production. In fact, for the past decade the Dakotas and Minnesota have alternated the top three spots in their friendly competition depending largely on the vagaries of weather patterns. At least 75 percent of the U.S. commercial sunflower production has taken place in those three states.

About 1,000 of those South Dakota acres were grown by Brad Schecher, a fourth generation farmer who also rotates wheat, corn, flax and soybean crops on his 3,500-acre spread located near Bison in the northwestern part of the state, one of the hot-bed regions for sunflowers.

Schecher took over the family farm from his father nearly 10 years ago and said the military conflict in Ukraine and other economic factors have converged to form a "perfect storm" that has constricted international supplies and created a favorable environment for the

current global sunflower oil market. Commodity prices have broken all-time records by soaring 60 percent compared to a year ago.

"It's as good as any of the 10 years I've been involved in it," Schecher said. "Ukraine was the largest producer of sunflowers and the largest exporter of sunflower oil on the world market with about 50 percent of the overall market, but a lot of their crop has been destroyed or confiscated by the Russian military. That's one of the things that have driven prices up, and it's been good for the farmers."

High prices and high returns are keeping Schecher interested in raising sunflowers, but sometimes he has his doubts. Especially when he gets tired of fighting the fires, a battle that all sunflower farmers are bound to face at some point.

Schecher said that for all the eye appeal sunflowers hold, it's not always easy to bring in the crop. He explained that reaping the high-yield, high-oleic variety that he grows for the sunoil market can cause fires to break out during the combining process in the



Brad Schecher farms roughly 1,000 acres of sunflowers near Bison. *Photo by Brooke Schecher*

fall. The elevated oil content of the plant - ranging anywhere from 38 to 44 percent - along with the dust that's created during combining can result in a combustible mixture that is sometimes ignited by the presence of static electricity.

To make sure he's prepared, Schecher keeps a battery-operated leaf blower aboard the combine at all times.

"I have to keep blowing the combine off when I get to the end of the field to keep a fire from breaking out," he said. "You can see the accumulated piles of dust start glowing red-hot, and you can usually smell it and get it put out before it gets out of control. It's a hazard that you just have to contend with. Sometimes it can happen two or three times a day, especially when it's dry conditions."

Other farmers, such as Lance Hourigan of Lemmon, S.D., have addressed this common problem by investing in after-market solutions. Hourigan reached northward across the state border and recruited Stelter Repair out of New Leipzig, N.D., to manufacture an air tower to help

Estimated number  
of sunflower acres

**600,000**

planted in South  
Dakota in 2021

reduce the risk of fire during harvest time. Resembling a chimney, the device draws in air from above the combine where there is much less dust and debris billowing from the threshing process, and blows the air over the engine to help it stay cool and clean.

While Schecher focuses on the high-oleic variety that represents about 80 percent of the market, there are other varieties grown for silage, birdfeed and other uses. Confection sunflowers, grown mostly in the eastern part of the state, are those found bagged up on convenience store shelves, the kind loaded with an assortment of flavors and

seasonings and meant for chewing.

While sunflowers are native to the continent, their history in North America can be traced to American Indian tribes in present-day Arizona and New Mexico. Archaeologists have found that these tribes domesticated the crop as early as 3000 B.C. The seed was ground or pounded into flour for cakes, mush or bread. Some tribes mixed the meal with vegetables such as beans and squash. The seed was cracked and eaten for snacking, while the oil was squeezed from the seed and used in making bread.

Non-food uses included purple dye for textiles, body painting and other decorations. Parts of the plant were used to treat snakebites. The oil was used on the skin and hair, and the dried stalk was used as a building material.

Today, agricultural scientists are exploring new uses for the plant while also figuring out how to provide protection from wireworms and other threats. Meanwhile, bullish farmers are keeping their eye on the global markets while exuding the same sense of sunny optimism associated with the sunflowers they work so hard to raise.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Water heating accounts for a large portion of home energy bills. To save energy (and money!) used for water heating, repair any leaky faucets, install low-flow fixtures and insulate accessible hot water lines.

When it's time to purchase a new washing machine or dishwasher, look for models that are ENERGY STAR®-certified.

Source: Dept. of Energy



# H-D ELECTRIC MONTHLY POSTER CONTEST WINNERS

## August Winner

Alayna Smith, daughter of Myles and Amber Smith from Castlewood, S.D., won the Art Set in a Wooden Case for being the poster contest winner in August. Congratulations, Alayna!



## July Winner

Esmae Beld, daughter of Orlando and Shanna Beld from Lake Norden, S.D., won the Art Set in a Wooden Case for being the poster contest winner in July. Congratulations, Esmae!



## Operating Statistics

	June 2021	June 2022
Customers .....	3,735	3,757
Amount Collected .....	\$1,093,800	\$975,322
Average Bill .....	\$292.85	\$259.60
Average Kilowatt-Hour .....	2,612	2,060
Kilowatt-Hours Purchased .....	10,355,976	8,997,950
Kilowatt-Hours Sold .....	9,757,325	8,491,375

# During harvest: know and teach electrical safety on the farm

## From dump truck driver to teenager, everyone should be aware of potential electrical hazards

Harvest means long hours, increased stress and tight schedules. Because of that, Safe Electricity reminds farmers that it only takes a split second for someone to come into contact with electricity. Your most seasoned worker to your least, your spouse, your son or daughter or other family member, an ag-related worker dropping off a load or applying fertilizer – any person on your farm is at risk of becoming injured or killed due to electrical contact. “Review overhead power line locations and height clearance with anyone and everyone working on the farm or doing business there,” says Erin Hollinshead, executive director of Safe Electricity. “Although harvest is filled with tight deadlines and heightened work stress, making time for safety, including electrical safety, can save lives.”

To help keep those who work or do business on your farm safe not only during harvest but year-round, follow these electrical safety tips:

- Educate everyone that potential electrical hazards include both direct and indirect contact with an overhead power line or pole. Indirect contact (coming too close to a power line or pole), could cause electricity to arc/jump.
- Both direct and indirect contact can change electricity's path to ground. Once that path changes, the stray voltage can energize anything in its path, such as a truck, a tractor, an extension, the ground, or a person.
- Start every workday with a safety meeting. Discuss all operations for the day and go over power line/pole locations. Emphasize safety above speed to everyone on the farm, especially during busy seasons like harvest.
- Never assume that because someone grew up on the farm that they understand the potential of stray voltage or other electrical hazards. In fact, do not assume this for anyone. For example, teens who have moved irrigation pipes to free an animal have been seriously hurt or electrocuted.
- Encourage drivers and operators to position grain augers in their lowest position or to lower truck bed boxes before moving. Be especially cautious of overhead lines when using augers in the field to load trucks on the

road.

- Review potential hazards with grain/dump truck drivers and spot them when possible. Also:
  - Encourage drivers to load and unload all materials away from overhead power lines.
  - Even better, create a dedicated drop zone away from all overhead power lines.
  - Post 10-foot clearance rule and “look up and look out” reminders.
- If you see that a hydraulic truck bed, extensions or other equipment gets within 10 feet of or contacts a power line, utility pole or guy wire, instruct the driver to stay in the cab. Call 9-1-1 to have your electric cooperative or utility dispatched to deenergize the power. Give instructions from 50 feet away and inform everyone else to stay back.
- Know how to instruct someone to properly exit a cab if necessary due to fire (do so from at least 50 feet away). The person should cross their arms close to their chest and make a solid jump out of the cab. Then, the person should make deliberate hops, with feet together, hopping away as far as they can. When people walk or run in an area with stray voltage, they could be exposed to two different voltages at the same time and become electricity's path to ground. This is known as step potential.
- Encourage folding and unfolding to be done well into the field, not at the field's edge, which could have power lines running next to it.
- Do not store irrigation pipes, hay bales, machinery or anything else under power lines.
- Be aware of power line locations in the proximity of grain bins. Always load and unload on the side without a power line. Contact your electric cooperative or utility with questions about grain bin power line clearance/ OSHA regulations.

Contact your electric cooperative or utility about damaged or downed power lines or poles. Utility crews would much rather check out an issue than risk a potentially dangerous situation. Learn more at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



**H-D Electric Cooperative will be closed Monday, Sept. 5, 2022, in celebration of Labor Day. Have a fun and safe holiday!**

# CHISLIC FESTIVAL



Roger and Lori Pietz claimed the New Age Nosh Award at last year's Chislic Festival in Freeman. Photos by SD Chislic Festival

## Step inside the Chislic Circle for unique food and lots of family fun

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

In a world already rife with scads of dander-raising hot-button issues, add chislic to the list. It seems that anytime more than a few cocksure chislic chefs gather around a grill, controversy can't be too far away.

The bickering typically begins with picking the proper protein. Opt for the traditional scrumptious cubes of mutton or lamb, or take a risk and go hog-wild with pork or maybe buffalo? How about swinging farther to the edge with venison, goat, beef or chicken? Dare we add emu to the list?

At least one restaurant is sending the chislic cosmos into spasms by serving up plates of (gasp) "fish-lic."

The plethora of opinions surrounding the preparation of chislic starts with the choice of meat and springboards from there into seasonings, cooking methods and even serving techniques. Grilled,

deep fried or air fried? Fork, toothpick or skewer? Don't get a chislic enthusiast started on the sauce selection.

Many people and various cultures have a strong attachment to their particular favorite types of food, but South Dakota's desire for chislic is unusually intense – especially for those who dwell within the Chislic Circle.

If the name Chislic Circle evokes images of a secret society that conducts mysterious midnight rituals around a raging bonfire deep in the forest, well, it's not quite that. It's more of a clever marketing concept, and an effective one for community leaders who take pride in their chislic lore. In fact, everyone is invited to come inside this circle.

At the center of the Chislic Circle lies Freeman, S.D., with the chislic realm falling inside a 100-mile radius and including communities such as Kaylor, Menno, Hurley, Marion, Bridgewater, Emery and others. The Circle was spun into creation in 2018 when a small

but passionate contingent of chislic connoisseurs decided to celebrate and demonstrate their pride in their unique culinary heritage.

Andrea Baer was part of that early chislic cadre. She said the catalyst came when chislic was officially declared the "state nosh" by the Legislature four years ago.

"Before then, when you mentioned chislic outside of the area, there was hardly anyone who knew what you were talking about," said Baer, who is a native of Turkey Ridge still living on the farm her forebears from Denmark settled several generations ago. "It's something that's very unique to the area and we



like to celebrate it.”

That celebration has taken the form of an annual event that’s been recognized by tourism officials as one of the state’s fastest-growing festivals with an estimated 10,000 attendees last year after a pandemic pause in 2020. Organizers were expecting up to a couple thousand for the inaugural event in 2018, but four times that many showed up. The following year, the party was moved from the Freeman softball field to the more spacious 40-acre Prairie Arboretum.

This year’s festival was held on July 30 with the usual food vendors touting their unique savory recipes, libations, live music, a family-friendly kid zone, bingo, dancing, a cornhole competition, 5K run/walk, helicopter rides and other forms of family-oriented fun.

Festival board member and chislic expert Ian Tuttle also presented, “From Russia with Love: The History of Chislic” at the nearby Heritage Hall Museum and Archives.

Tuttle enjoys telling the story of how chislic arrived in the late 1800s with a particular group of immigrants described as “Germans from Russia.” A group of German Mennonites and Hutterites originally fled religious persecution in the 16th century and migrated eastward through the Russian Empire where they raised crops and sheep.

They chopped the meat into small pieces, cooked it over a fire and called it “shashlik,” a word for “skewer” rooted in the Turkic languages of Central Asia. The word is a close cousin to the more widely known “shish kebab.”

Eventually, those migrants found their way to present-day southeastern South Dakota and made sure to bring their shashlik with them. Those residing



inside the Chislic Circle generally recognize Johann Hoellwarth as the individual who introduced chislic to the Dakota Territory. Born in 1849 to a German Lutheran family in the Crimea, Hoellwarth settled just outside of where Freeman is today and was laid to eternal rest in the town.

Each year a panel of seven fearless judges takes on the task of naming the festival’s “best chislic.” For the past two years the top Traditional Division Award has gone to Kyle Sturzenbecker and his squad of Sheep Flockers.

Sturzenbecker said he and his fellow chef Josh Goehring don’t characterize themselves as competitive, but he also isn’t about to give away any trade secrets.

“You don’t have to do a whole lot. I just let the flavor of the meat speak for itself,” he said. “Honestly, I never

thought I’d win. I just like to cook good food that people enjoy eating.”

In 2021, the non-traditional New Age Nosh Award was claimed by Roger Pietz, owner of the Pietz Kuchen Kitchen. The establishment is mostly known for its rich custard dessert, but for the festival Pietz decided to go in a different direction and put together a tangy chislic pizza.

Ultimately, the Chislic Festival is about celebrating family, honoring the past and preserving the rural lifestyle.

“The tradition of chislic comes not from cities, the wealthy, or the privileged,” Baer said, “but from the rural, hardworking farm tradition of the people who settled this area. We thrive on the rural, while building the region through vibrant community.”



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## Anglers get hooked on fly fishing for fun and sport

**Billy Gibson**

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Tall tales, small tales, long tales, short tales... Buddy Seiner is interested in hearing any fishing tale you'd like to tell.

While he's partial to fly fishing, Seiner is passionate about fishing in all of its forms. And he offers an open invitation to anglers of every ilk to share their stories of fishing adventures enjoyed with friends, family members or in the presence of one's own company.

Seiner started [www.fishstories.org](http://www.fishstories.org) after his grandfather passed away and he realized there were no audio or video recordings of the many outings they took together casting flies and chatting about whatever popped into their minds in the moment.

Several years ago, Seiner stood on the main stage during a TED X speech in Rapid City and explained his purpose in creating the website. Soon after, he began hauling in a mess of fish stories submitted by avid anglers from far and wide. Today, the archive holds more than 400 sagas of lunkers that were landed, the big ones that got away and precious time spent with loved ones in the great outdoors.

"I believe all fish stories need to be told," said Seiner, who works as a communications consultant based in Pierre. "I used to fish a lot with my grandpa and I realized I'd never hear his voice again after he passed away. He was full of wisdom and had a great sense of humor. I had some regrets about not recording him, so I started this project as a way for people to preserve those cherished voices and to preserve the memories."

Seiner observes that many people are in some way connected with fishing, whether they pursue it themselves or know someone who likes the feel of a rod and reel. He has found that the stories submitted to the site feature not only intriguing narratives of reaching the day's limits under clear cerulean skies but they also reveal relationships that run deeper than the deepest river channel. Some describe disastrous events.

One of those is the story of an outdoors escape that quickly turned tragic. A young woman tells how she lost her husband to an accident while the two were ice fishing on a frozen lake in Minnesota.

While there are stories of heartache and loss, Seiner said most tales tend to trend toward the positive. He has his own fond memories of how his uncle introduced him to fly fishing

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Part art and part skill, fly fishing is an increasingly popular pastime across the region. *Photo by Travel South Dakota*

26 years ago and how he started tying his own flies as a college student.

“My Uncle Dwaine gave me a rod and I went in the back yard and started practicing. He always told me I’d enjoy it and he was right,” Seiner said.

It was at Bear Butte Creek near Sturgis that Seiner landed his first trout. He was casting for a brown trout beneath a willow tree. The fish went for the dry fly – a blue wing olive – and both the fish and Seiner were hooked. The fish was landed and released but Seiner’s love of the sport has never waned.

Fly fishing is growing in popularity across the region as more anglers discover the adventure and what many describe as the therapeutic benefits of casting flies out across the water. Though fly fishing is often associated with the clear, cold, fast-running streams found in the Black Hills area, Seiner said there is a wide range of options available depending on an angler’s tastes and preferences.

“We have a lot of water that’s prime for fly fishing,” he said. “It’s a sport Buddy Seiner started fishstories.org to preserve fishing tales and memories like those he has of his late fishing pal, Lucy.

that’s new to a lot of people and it’s gaining momentum. You can catch anything on a fly rod. You can go for trout and fish the stock dams out west, you can sight-fish for walleye or channel catfish in the clear waters of the Missouri River, you can fish the glacial lakes in the northeast or fish for carp out near Yankton.”

Whether they go for carp or brown trout, many fly fishers take an interest in maintaining and preserving the habitat for future generations to enjoy.

Seiner serves on the board of a group called Black Hills Fishers and works

with folks like Hans Stephenson of Dakota Angler and Outfitter in Rapid City to promote the sport of fly fishing, support conservation and educate the public on how to preserve the environment.

“Fly fishing is so much fun,” he said, “but if we don’t do what we can to protect our woods and waters, it will be a tragedy. We need to stay committed to preservation and conservation, and I’ve found that most people who enjoy the outdoors are very conscientious. We want people to have fishing stories to share for generations to come.”



## REGISTER TO WIN!

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**SEPTEMBER 1-5**  
**South Dakota State Fair**  
*Photo Credit: SD State Fair*

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

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



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

**AUGUST 24-28**  
**Corn Palace Festival**  
604 N Main St., Mitchell, SD,  
605-995-8430

**AUGUST 24-28**  
**Kool Deadwood Nites**  
Citywide, Deadwood, SD,  
605-578-1876

**AUGUST 25-28**  
**Steam Threshing Jamboree**  
Prairie Village, Madison, SD,  
605-256-3644

**AUGUST 26-27**  
**Hill City Wine, Brew and BBQ**  
Elm St., Hill City, SD, hillcitywine  
brewandbbq.com

**AUGUST 26-27**  
**Sizzlin' Summer Nights**  
Main St., Aberdeen, SD,  
605-226-3441

**AUGUST 26-28**  
**Hot Air Balloon Festival**  
Various Locations, Hot Springs,  
SD, fallriverballoonfest.com

**AUG. 30-SEPT. 4**  
**Sturgis Mustang Rally**  
Thunderdome, Sturgis, SD,  
sturgismustangrally.com

**SEPTEMBER 1-5**  
**South Dakota State Fair**  
890 3rd St. SW, Huron, SD,  
sdstatefair.com

**SEPTEMBER 4**  
**Dakota Five-O**  
City Park, Spearfish, SD,  
dakotafiveo.com

**SEPTEMBER 8-11**  
**S.D. State Senior Games**  
Watertown, SD, 605-491-0635  
or 605-753-3668

**SEPTEMBER 10**  
**605 Black Hills Classic**  
Lions Park, Spearfish, SD,  
605-274-1999

**SEPTEMBER 10**  
**Germanfest**  
Fawick Park, Sioux Falls, SD,  
siouxfallssistercities.com/event

**SEPTEMBER 10**  
**Insect Festival**  
McCrary Gardens, Brookings,  
SD, 605-688-6707

**SEPTEMBER 10**  
**Sidewalk Arts Festival**  
Main Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD,  
605-367-6000

**SEPTEMBER 16-18**  
**South Dakota Film Festival**  
Capitol Theatre, Aberdeen, SD,  
southdakotafilmfest.org

**SEPTEMBER 17-18**  
**Northeast South Dakota  
Celtic Faire and Games**  
37925 Youth Camp Rd.,  
Aberdeen, SD, 605-622-0144

**SEPTEMBER 23-24**  
**Hops and Hogs Festival**  
Citywide, Deadwood, SD,  
605-578-1876

**SEPTEMBER 23-25**  
**HNIRC Championship of  
Champions**  
Stanley County Fairgrounds,  
Fort Pierre, SD, horsenations  
indianrelay.com

**SEPTEMBER 24**  
**Great Downtown Pumpkin  
Festival**  
Main Street Square, Rapid City,  
SD, 605-716-7979

**SEPTEMBER 24-25**  
**Menno Pioneer Power Show**  
Pioneer Acres, Menno, SD,  
mennopowershow@yahoo.com

**SEPT. 29-OCT. 1**  
**Custer State Park Buffalo  
Roundup & Arts Festival**  
Custer, SD, gfp.sd.gov/buffalo-  
roundup

**SEPT. 30-OCT. 1**  
**Oktoberfest**  
Citywide, Deadwood, SD,  
605-578-1876

**SEPT. 30-OCT. 2**  
**SiouxperCon**  
1201 N West Ave., Sioux Falls,  
SD, siouxpercon.com

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