

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Get Out & Vote!

It's Your Civic Duty

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Upcoming Energy Projects

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Your FEM Electric Board of Directors

March Board Report

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of FEM Electric was held in Ipswich, South Dakota at 8:30 a.m. on March 20, 2026, pursuant to due call and notice. It being determined that a quorum was present, President Gary Bachman called the meeting to order. Secretary Eric Odenbach kept the minutes of the meeting. The following directors were declared present by roll call: Gary Bachman, Eric Odenbach, Tom Thorpe, Kelly Melius and Paula Petersen. Electrical Manager Ryan Holien, Director of Finance and Benefits Rhonda Tuscherer, Operation Manager Sean Christiansen and CEO Scott Moore.

Guest Employee: Gregg Zwart

Changes to the agenda: None

Changes/Additions to Minutes from January 20, 2026, meeting: remove Operation Manager Sean Christiansen from attending February board meeting.

Next Meeting Date: After a review of the calendars, directors agreed that the next regular meeting of the board would be on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. to be held at FEM Electric Board Room in Ipswich, South Dakota.

Moved by Kelly Melius, seconded by Eric Odenbach and carried to approve

administrative business.

The board and staff watched NRECA Governance Video titled "Methods of Voting at Electric Cooperatives".

Moved by Tom Thorpe was seconded by Paula Petersen and carried to acknowledge the manager, and staff reports along with East River Electric load management report.

Director of Finance and Benefits Rhonda Tuscherer discussed 990 Director info with board and completion timeline. Tuscherer also discussed NRECA National Director Study.

Board member Paula Petersen received a NRECA certificate and pin for completing NRECA Board Leadership Certificate.

The board acknowledges receiving and reviewing February 2026 Cyber Security Report.

Resolutions and Contracts: The board acknowledged receiving RESCO Director Nomination information.

Membership Business: Board acknowledged membership business.

New Memberships, Member Cancellations and Contracts:

Disconnects: Jeff Hutchinson, Faulkton, SD, Active Farm

Reconnects: Colby & Bethany Speck, Faulkton, SD, Active Farm

Contracts: Kyler & Morgan Johnson, Leola, SD, House; Jeremy & Chantel Stoecker, Onaka, SD, Shop; Steven & Rene Wood, Northville, SD, Shop

Retired Locations: Valley Plains Equipment, Britton, SD, GPS Tower

Moved by Eric Odenbach seconded by Kelly Melius to approve contracts for Kyler and Morgan Johnson, Jeremy and Chantel Stoecker, Steven and Rene Wood.

Capital Credits:

Estates: March 2026 – None

73 & Older: March 2026 – None

Board acknowledged receipt of following financial business.

Financial Business: The board acknowledged reviewing the following financial information:

The check register for the month of February 2026 contained information on checks #36003 through #36094 and all automatic payments/withdrawals for February 2026 totaling \$426,447.57

February 2026 financials were reviewed.

Electrical Manager Ryan Holien informed the board an account was under billed for October, November, and December 2025. Director of Finance and Benefits Rhonda Tuscherer explained that per the auditors guidance, the financials were reopened and the 2025 books were adjusted. All tax reports, audit reports and the RUS report were updated. The capital credit margin for 2025 changed

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**COOPERATIVE
CONNECTIONS**

**FEM ELECTRIC
ASSOCIATION**

(USPS 189-720)

Board of Directors

Gary Bachman, President
Tom Thorpe, Vice President
Eric Odenbach, Secretary
Paula Petersen, Treasurer
Kelly Melius, Asst. Secretary/
Treasurer
Vaughn Beck, Attorney

CEO/General Manager

Scott Moore
info@femelectric.coop

Management Staff

Sean Christiansen
Operations Manager
Ryan Holien
Electrical Manager
Rhonda Tuscherer
*Director of Finance and
Benefits*

Editor's e-mail:

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FEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of FEM Electric Association, Inc., 800 5th Ave., Ipswich, SD 57451. FEM Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to members on electric cooperative matters and better living.

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Design assistance by SDREA

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employer.**



Scott Moore
General Manager/CEO

The never-ending question: "Are we in a stable economy?" My opinion would be, it depends where you are in life and financially. There is no doubt that prices continue to increase and when one item moves up in price it pushes the next item to increase. With the increase in gasoline and diesel fuel, shipping will increase and that increase will land on the consumer. In South Dakota I was once told we don't feel the large swings of the economy like residents on either coast do but have a more stable economy where businesses can weather and survive a downturn in profits.

I would like to believe South Dakota businesses and residents have moved slowly and steadily over the past twenty plus years investing in a sustainable economy. For the past twenty years, ethanol has helped our ag producers and communities survive with value added products produced from corn and the creation of jobs. Just in the past fifteen years we have seen the number of soybean processing plants increase,

helping to add value to soybeans and livestock producers. The state has seen new livestock processing plants being built in Huron (turkey), Aberdeen (beef), and Sioux Falls (pork). The best part of some of the ethanol and soybean processing plants is that local people had the opportunity to invest in these companies, keeping profits and ownership local.

I remember in the late 1970's and early 1980' when community leaders would sit around a table in about every town in South Dakota and the topic was "we need to create good paying jobs to keep our most valuable assets from leaving the state". Those assets were kids graduating from high school and college that are now the community leaders in South Dakota and looking to retire.

We should thank our community leaders for the past forty plus years for guidance in creating strong, stable economy with manageable growth in rural South Dakota. Have our main streets changed

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**FOLLOW US ON
SOCIAL MEDIA**

@FEMElectric on

@fem_electric on

@FEMelectric on

We'll post outage updates, safety tips, news and more to keep our members informed on all the latest from FEM Electric.

Statement Mailing Dates

May 27, 2026 for May's energy
June 26, 2026 for June's energy

Regardless of the statement mail out date, payments are due in the office by the 9th of the following month.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH: TIPS FOR PRIORITIZING SAFETY

At your local cooperative, Electrical Safety Month is recognized every May, but the importance of practicing safety year-round is always emphasized. From co-op crews to the consumer-members served, everyone has a part to play in prioritizing safety.

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured or electrocuted as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. Electricity is a necessity that powers daily life, but it can also be dangerous — something your local cooperative understands firsthand from working with it 365 days a year.

Safety is more than a catchphrase. Cooperative leadership recognizes the responsibility to keep employees safe while also helping protect members and the broader community. That's why your local cooperative hosts safety demonstrations at community events and in schools throughout the year, highlighting the dangers of electricity. These demonstrations often include emergency scenarios, such as what to do in a car accident involving a utility pole and downed power lines, along with discussions about the dangers of pad-mounted transformers and overloading circuits with too many electronic devices.

Electricity is an integral part of modern life. Given the widespread use of electrical devices, tools and appliances, here are a few practical electrical safety tips:

Watch for frayed wires. Power cords can become damaged from age, heavy use or excessive current flow. If cords become frayed or cut, replace them to avoid shock hazards.

Avoid overloading circuits. Circuits can only handle a limited amount of electricity. Running too many devices on one circuit can lead to overheating and potential fire risk.

Label circuit breakers. Understanding your home's electrical system can help prevent overloads. If your home is more than 40 years old and you plan to install large appliances, contact a qualified electrician.

Use extension cords properly. Never plug one extension cord into another. "Daisy chaining" can cause overheating and fire hazards. Do not exceed the cord's wattage, and avoid using extension cords as permanent solutions. If additional outlets are needed, consult a licensed electrician.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to talk with children

about playing it safe and smart around electricity, including staying aware of overhead power lines near outdoor play areas.

Providing a reliable energy supply 24/7, 365 days a year is a top priority. Equally important is keeping the community safe around electricity.

Contact your local cooperative for additional electrical safety tips or to request a safety demonstration at a school or upcoming community event.



"Do not fly kites by power lines!"

Casen Yuker

Casen cautions readers not to fly kites around power lines. Thank you for sharing your picture, Casen! Casen's parents are Lance and Tarah Yuker from Aberdeen S.D.

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.

Delicious DESSERTS

RHUBARB CAKE DESSERT

Ingredients:

1 pkg. yellow cake mix
1 cup sugar
4 cups rhubarb, diced
2 cups half and half

Method

Prepare cake mix as directed on package and pour into a greased 9x13 pan. Mix sugar and rhubarb together. Spoon evenly over cake batter. Pour half and half over top of rhubarb mixture. Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes. This is like an upside-down cake with custard on the bottom of the cake.

Marla Gilbert
Southeastern Electric

FUZZY NAVEL CAKE

Ingredients:

1 pkg. yellow cake mix
1 instant vanilla pudding
(large, 5.1 oz. size)
3/4 cup peach schnapps
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup orange juice
4 eggs

Glaze

1 cup powdered sugar
4 tbsps. orange juice
2 tbsps. peach schnapps

Method

Spray a 12-cup fluted baking pan with cooking spray, dust with flour. Mix all cake ingredients together until well blended, spread evenly in pan. Bake at 350° for 45-50 minutes until golden brown and cake springs back when lightly touched. Cool cake for 20 minutes. Run a long, sharp knife around the edges to loosen, and invert onto platter. Whisk glaze ingredients together until smooth. With wooden skewer, poke holes on top and around sides of cake. Spoon glaze over the warm cake, allowing to seep in holes, and drizzle down the sides and center. Cool completely before slicing.

Sally Florey
Charles Mix Electric

HAWAIIAN PINEAPPLE CAKE

Ingredients:

2 cups flour
2 cups sugar
2 eggs
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. vanilla
Pinch salt
1 20 oz. can crushed pineapple,
undrained (in natural juice, not
heavy syrup)

Frosting

1/2 cup butter, softened
1 8 oz. cream cheese softened
1 tsp. vanilla
1 1/2 cups powdered sugar

Method

Mix all cake ingredients together until well blended. Bake in greased 9x13 pan at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until top is golden brown.

Combine cream cheese, butter and vanilla. Beat until smooth and creamy. Gradually add powdered sugar. Spread frosting on cake while still warm. Garnish with some toasted coconut if desired.

Sally Florey
Charles Mix Electric

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.

BOARD REPORT CONTINUED

Board Report continued from page 2

from \$268,930 to \$361,361.

Federated – South Dakota Group Retention Update was reviewed.

Moved by Eric Odenbach seconded by Kelly Melius and carried to approve board expense reports and attorney fees.

Legal Update: none

Meeting Report:

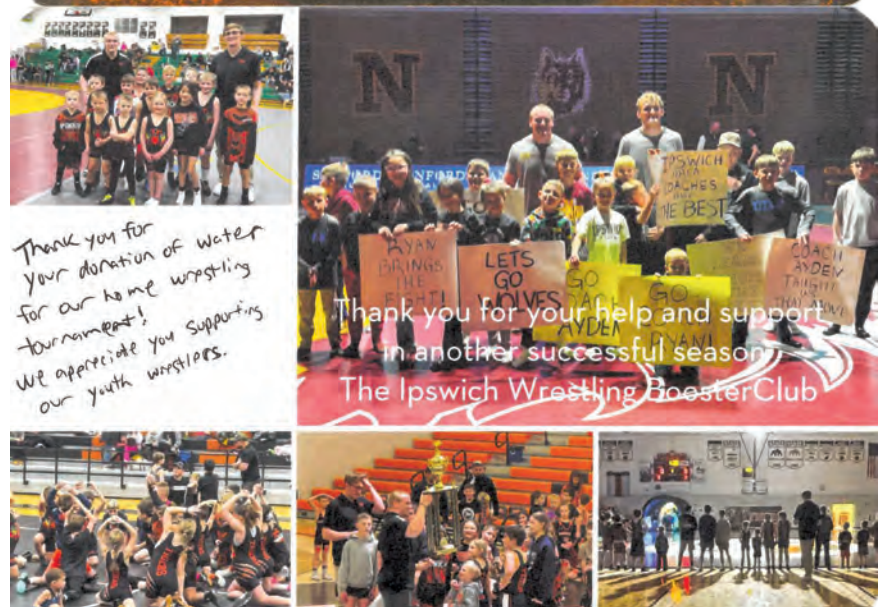
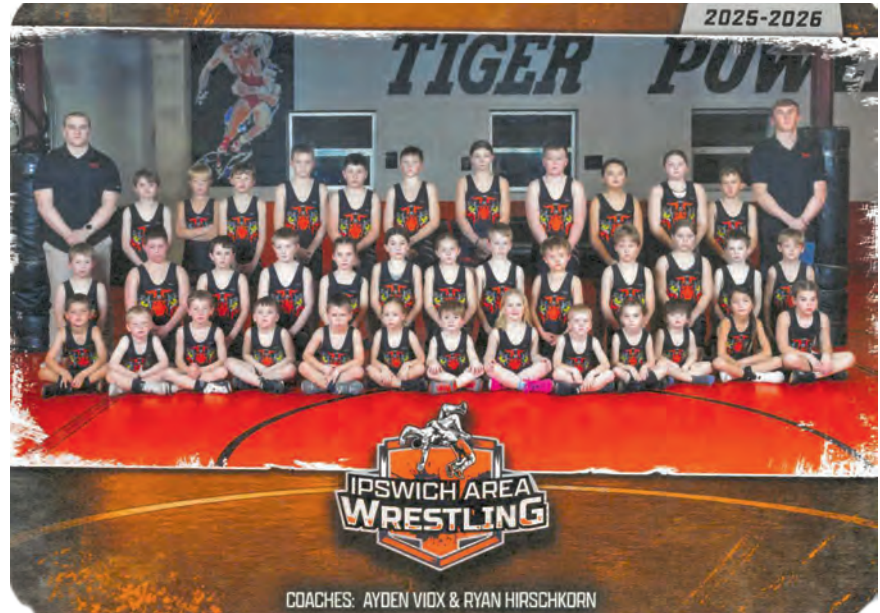
East River monthly board report was given by Gary Bachman and monthly video was watched.

The safety meeting minutes from February 18, 2026, were acknowledged along with an accident report.

Adjourn: President Gary Bachman declared the meeting adjourned.

Manager's Report continued from page 3
in the past twenty years? Yes, they have but so has how people live and purchase products. South Dakota has great job opportunities. We have companies that want to relocate to or expand in South Dakota but question if we have a large enough work force. We have some of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation and as all of you know, the best state to live in and raise our children. As we move forward South Dakotans will continue to see a strong stable economy. We will continue to see changes in how we live and do business but at a pace that is acceptable for most South Dakota residents.

If you are looking to expand your electrical needs, please contact Sean Christiansen or Ryan Holien at 605 426 6891.



BASIN TOUR

JULY 13TH - 14TH

See first hand where your power comes from as we guide you on a tour of Basin Electric Power Cooperative and generation facilities.

Free for members of FEM Electric! Travel, tours, hotel accommodations, meals and evening entertainment provided!

At least one registrant must be a current member of FEM Electric to be eligible, and priority will be given to members who have not attended the tour before. There is no cost to cooperative members for this tour. **Must be 18 years or older.**

Name(s):

Address:

Phone(s):

Pick-Up Point (select one):

IPSWICH ROSCOE BOWDLE EUREKA

An itinerary and additional information will be sent out about one month prior to the tour. Please be watching your mail sometime in July.

Please read through tour guidelines as listed on the Member Basin Electric Tour page of the FEM Electric website to be fully prepared for this event.



femelectric.coop | Return Form to:

FEM Electric
Attn: Sonje Oban
PO Box 468
Ipswich, SD 57451
oban@femelectric.coop



ONE VOTE MAKES A DIFFERENCE



Chuck Sloan • Piedmont, S.D.

Board Treasurer, West River Electric Association

U.S. Air Force 1983-2003

Chuck Sloan has spent much of his life serving his nation.

Sloan enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1983 and served 21 years on active duty

before retiring as a master sergeant in 2004. In that time, he was stationed at bases all around the world, including Oman, South Korea, Turkey, and the Pacific. Since 2004, Sloan has worked as a civilian at Ellsworth Air Force Base, where today he is Chief of Operations Compliance.

Serving in the military, Sloan observed firsthand how seriously service members took absentee voting and civic participation, despite being thousands of miles from American soil. Their passion helped ignite Sloan's own admiration for America's democratic system of government.

"If I found somebody a little laissez-faire about voting, saying, 'my vote probably won't count,' I would give them a spiel," Sloan explained. "Yes, your vote does count, and you'll want to be able to say that you made that vote."

He continued, "If you don't choose to exercise that responsibility, then later on if you're displeased, you really can't

complain about it because you didn't make a choice – If anything, vote and give yourself the opportunity to legitimately complain!"

Sloan said people should never underestimate the importance of showing up and making their voices heard, because in close races, one vote can tip the scale.

"There are many instances when one vote may have been a determining factor," Sloan said. "It may not be a general election, but how about in a state or local election where one vote can be the deciding factor? That happens more often than one would think. Your vote matters, no matter what you do."

Sloan brought that civic-mindedness along with him to West River Electric Association, where he serves on the Board of Directors and helps make decisions in the interest of his neighbors and communities he represents.

Sloan said it all just comes back to civic responsibility and staying involved.

"From the time I turned 18, I've never missed a vote," Sloan said. "It's second nature. It's too important to not do."



VOTING STRENGTHENS COMMUNITIES



Evan Buckmiller • De Smet, S.D.

General Manager, Kingsbury Electric Cooperative

De Smet School District Board

For Kingsbury Electric Cooperative General Manager Evan Buckmiller, his call to public service came after a mid-term resignation on the De Smet School District

Board left a vacancy that needed to be filled.

"The board had to appoint someone to fill the seat," Buckmiller said. "Initially when I was asked, I didn't know if I wanted to do it, but I also knew that my wife and I have two young kids in the school system, so I agreed to fill the spot until the next election."

Buckmiller wasn't expecting to develop a passion for civic-service, but six years and two election cycles later, he's still representing the De Smet community on the school board.

"It's for my kids, to make sure they have the best education opportunities possible to prepare them for their future," Buckmiller added.

He said that while serving on the school board has been a

rewarding endeavor, there are also moments that are discouraging; some people will sit out elections, but are also vocal about board decisions they disagree with.

"I receive phone calls about how we are doing everything wrong, but they don't want to step up to be a part of change," Buckmiller explained.

His advice is simple: show up.

"Public participation at the monthly school board meetings is always encouraged," Buckmiller said. "When a community is engaged, there is more diverse input and you get to see the needs of everyone. The needs for one person might not be the same as another, and when you are sitting on a board you want to hear the needs of everyone so you can make the best decision possible for everyone."

Buckmiller said when more people get involved and exercise their civic duties, the communities like his are better for it.

"Being active in the community makes the community stronger and allows different opinions to be heard," Buckmiller said.

"When you show up to meetings and vote, you are giving the board direction so they can make decisions that are in the best interest of everyone."

STICK UP FOR YOURSELF & VOTE



Don Schurdevin • Elk Point, S.D.
Board President, Union County Electric Cooperative
U.S. Navy 1962-1968

Serving on the Union County Electric Cooperative board for more than 25 years, Don Schurdevin has built a reputation for steady leadership and a strong commitment

to the cooperative and its members. But before serving his neighbors and community on the co-op board, Schurdevin first served in a different way. He served not just his Union County neighbors, but his entire country in the U.S. Navy. Schurdevin enrolled during his junior year of high school in 1962, serving active duty in Vietnam from 1963 to 1965, some of that time aboard the USS Midway. The experience helped shape his views on patriotism, civic duty and personal responsibility.

“In the navy, you learn to get along with people, but you learn to also stick up for yourself, because nobody else – is so you better take care of your own business,” he said.

That’s the attitude that Schurdevin brings to his civic participation. He said serving in the military gave him a deeper appreciation for the freedoms Americans enjoy, including voting.

Schurdevin believes participating in elections is one of the most important ways citizens can stay involved in their communities and help shape the future of their community, state and country.

“I think I voted in every election since I could,” Schurdevin recalled. “School board election, county, state – if I was able to vote I was voting.”

That sense of duty carried into his years of cooperative service. As a director, Schurdevin remains focused on serving members and ensuring the co-op continues to meet local needs. Schurdevin encourages others to “stick up for yourself” by staying informed and voting for a better future.



LEADERS DEPEND ON YOU SPEAKING UP



Chris Rahn • Mission, S.D.
Member Services Manager, Cherry-Todd Electric Cooperative
Todd County School District Board, Rosebud Sioux Tribe

Chris Rahn was not always interested in his local government. In fact, up until just several years ago, he sat many elections out.

But through his work at Cherry-Todd Electric Cooperative and the commitment to community that came with it, Rahn gained a new perspective on civic participation, realizing that change only happens when peoples’ voices are heard.

“I believe everybody who has an opinion should come out and vote,” Rahn said. “One vote matters. One vote can change an entire election.”

Rahn’s indifference to voting began to change as he was asked to take on more responsibilities with the co-op. Cherry-Todd Electric General Manager Tim Grablander nominated Rahn to the Rushmore Electric Federal Credit Union Board of Directors, where Rahn now serves as president.

Shortly after, he was encouraged by local community leaders to apply for a board seat with the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. The tribal

council voted to seat Rahn on the judiciary committee, leading to his first real experience with public service. Like flipping a switch, Rahn’s enthusiasm led to his appointment to other tribal boards, including the Tribal Utilities Commission, Tribal Tax Commission, and the Rosebud Energy Services Company.

Rahn said serving in tribal government opened his mind to the impact he can have on his community. That realization inspired Rahn to run for his first publicly-elected position as a school board member for the Todd County School District.

“I wanted to be more involved in my daughter’s education and just listen to the community’s input,” Rahn said, restating the importance of community members actively engaging with elected officials and sharing feedback.

He continued: “I feel like I’ve been able to bridge the gap between the people I represent and the administration and other public leaders.”

As Rahn looks ahead to years of future public service to work for a better community, he encourages others to step up as well — and all it takes is a vote.

“If you speak up, your voice is heard,” he continued. “When everyone’s voice is heard, we can make better decisions for the community as a whole.”

Photos by Shutterstock

FEM ELECTRIC

PRESENTS THE 2026 YOUTH TOUR

JUNE 14 - 20, 2026

THREE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SELECTED TO REPRESENT FEM ELECTRIC ON THE 2026 YOUTH TOUR TO WASHINGTON D.C.



Austin Nash submitted one of three winning applications for the 2026 Youth Tour. He is a junior at Northwestern Area High School, and is the son of Kevin and Crystal Nash.

Austin is involved in FFA where he is the president, FBLA where he is the treasurer, FCA, football where he was team captain, wrestling where he was also team captain, and track. He is also a part of the WIN baseball team, plays percussion in band, and sings in the school choir. In his spare time, he likes to purchase old tractors and fix them up with his dad.

He enjoys learning and has an interest in studying government his senior year of high school, and believes this trip will help him with that goal.

Ava Davis was selected as another Youth Tour attendee for 2026. She is a senior at Ipswich High School, and the daughter of Justin and Courtney Davis.

Ava is involved in volleyball, golf, football stats, basketball stats, band, jazz band, color guard, and FBLA. Her extracurricular activities include 4-H and junior leaders. She's participated in South Dakota Ambassadors of Music and was also a Girls State delegate.

Ava wants to learn more about government, develop her leadership skills, and learn more about the electric cooperative system while she's in Washington D.C.



Bella Unser also submitted a winning application to attend the Youth Tour. She is a junior at Ipswich High School, and is the daughter of Sara Unser.

At school, Bella is in cheerleading, FBLA, choir, National Honor Society, and band. She did North Area Honor band this year, and was accepted to be in the SDSU Festival Honor Band where she plays flute.

Bella hopes to learn more about our country, its history, important figures of America, and wants to cultivate her business and leadership skills while on this trip.

78TH ANNUAL MEETING 6.23.26

**Dinner @ 5:00 pm - Meeting @6:30 pm
Ipswich school**

**DON'T MISS THE 78TH ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE FEM MEMBERSHIP**

Districts 2 and 3 up for Election

**\$500 Young Adults Light The Way Scholarship
High School Junior and Seniors eligible**

Must attend entire meeting with at least one member parent.

**\$40 ENERGY CREDIT TO ALL MEMBERS WHO
ATTEND THE ENTIRE MEETING**

**\$500 in grand prize drawings will be given away.
Must be present to win.**

Dinner will be provided for all attendees.

Keep up to date with your cooperative.

BUILDING FOR WHAT COMES NEXT

Basin Electric's Pioneer Generation Station, located near Williston, N.D.
Photo Submitted by Basin Electric

Basin Electric Expands Generation Capacity to Meet Growing Demand

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Although the flick of a switch can seem close at hand, the electricity that powers our world is often generated many miles away.

For rural cooperative members, electricity often comes from North Dakota, where Basin Electric Power Cooperative operates a fleet of power plants to serve rural communities across nine states. As demand continues to build across that system, the infrastructure behind it is growing right alongside it.

This steady growth has shaped the work now underway across Basin Electric's service territory. In response, the cooperative has kept up with demand by expanding existing generation facilities, building a new power plant and supporting the system with additional transmission projects in just a few short years.

"We're seeing load growth across our system, and it's coming from a combination of residential, agricultural, commercial and energy development," said Gavin McCollam, Basin Electric's senior vice president and chief operating officer. "When you step back and look at it as a whole, it becomes clear that we need to continue building to keep pace with that growth."



New transmission lines in western North Dakota support Basin Electric's newest generation assets.
Photo Submitted by Basin Electric

Pioneer Generation Station

To maintain reliability and keep the lights on for their members, Basin Electric recently expanded its generation capacity through new development to Pioneer Generation Station near Williston, N.D.

Originally developed in the early 2010s, the facility grew in phases over time. Those additions turned Pioneer Generation Station into one of Basin Electric's most important generation assets, but within a decade, the pace of that growth had begun to change.

"Coming out of COVID, not just us but everybody

was seeing rapid increases in loads,” McCollam said. “At that point, we were asking what we could do the quickest to add capacity.”

To meet the need, Basin Electric moved forward with Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV. The cooperative completed the project in 2025, adding about 580 megawatts of generation and bringing the site’s total capacity to 822 megawatts, enough to power roughly 400,000 homes.

The expansion moved quickly in part because Basin Electric built on what it already had.

“We had the site and the people that worked there, so we could add onto it a lot quicker than we could analyze and research new sites,” McCollam said.

Bison Generation Station

Still, Basin Electric continued building for traditional member load growth, beyond Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV, turning to a new project: Bison Generation Station.

Located near Epping, N.D., the natural gas-fueled generation project is being built from the ground up as a large-scale, natural gas facility designed to meet future demand. Once completed, the combined-cycle power plant will produce approximately 1,490

megawatts of electricity, making it the largest power plant solely owned by Basin Electric – almost double the capacity of Pioneer Generation Station. The plant is expected to come online in two phases, with the first unit operating in 2029 and the second in 2030.

Unlike Pioneer Generation Station, which expanded over time, Bison Generation Station is being built as a single, large project.

“We had a history of building small units, piecemealing them in as quickly as we could. That worked for a long time, but eventually we reached a point where we needed to think about building differently,” McCollam said. “There was a point where we recognized that continuing to add smaller pieces wasn’t going to be the most effective approach. We needed to build something at a scale that would allow us to stay ahead of that growth.”

Serendipitously, the transition from Pioneer Generation Station to Bison Generation Station happened on the same day. Basin Electric finished construction at Pioneer and turned the facility over to operations, then received the permits to begin construction on Bison.

“I’m kind of a nerd,” McCollam

said, laughing. “I’m nerdy enough to think this wasn’t a coincidence, and the power plant gods were smiling on us.”

Once complete, it will become a central part of Basin Electric’s generation portfolio.

“It’s going to be the flagship of our gas fleet,” McCollam said. “It’s being designed with the understanding that the system we’re serving today is going to continue to grow.”

Looking Ahead

According to McCollam, these new generation assets are a response to the organic growth Basin Electric is seeing across its traditional membership, including residential demand, agriculture, commercial activity and energy production.

“We support that growth where it happens, and we make sure the system can deliver power where it’s needed,” he said.

For Basin Electric, the work underway now is part of a longer process to ensure reliability in a time of growing energy demand.

“The entire purpose of Basin Electric is to provide reliable service to our membership,” McCollam said. “As that system grows, we have to continue building to keep up with it.”



2026 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

FEM ELECTRIC IS PROUD TO PRESENT THE 2026 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Trent Beyers submitted the winning application for the \$1500 Basin Electric and FEM Electric Scholarship! He is a senior at Edmunds Central High School, and is the son of Margaret and Allen Beyers.

Trent has been heavily involved in sports, participating in basketball, football and golf. He has lettered in all three, and qualified for state in golf. Outside of sports, he's been involved in band, student council and FFA. He also gives his time to run the annual Halloween carnival for elementary students, run basketball camps, and taught FOCUS Friday classes.

When he graduates, Trent plans to attend SDSU for Ag Business because he wants to return to his family farm to help his two older brothers. FEM Electric wishes to congratulate Trent Beyers on his achievements, and wishes him well on his future endeavors.

Josie Knutson also submitted a winning application for the \$1000 Basin Electric and FEM Electric Scholarship. She is a senior at Ipswich High School, and is the daughter of Morgan and Cody Knutson.

Josie plays volleyball, and participates in FBLA and FCA. She takes girls basketball stats, volunteers to coach youth volleyball, volunteers at her school's after school program, is in the National Honor Society and on the Honor Roll.

After she graduates this spring, she plans to attend Northland Community and Technical College in Minnesota where she hopes to earn her Associate of Applied Science in Radiologic Technology. In the future, she hopes to work in a hospital as a Radiologic Technologist. FEM Electric would like to congratulate Josie on her hard work and dedication, and wishes her luck!



Audrey Braun was one of the recipients of the \$500 FEM Electric Scholarships. She is a senior at Ipswich High School, and is the daughter of Michelle and Dustin Braun.

Audrey volunteers her time helping with her school's after school program, and during community events such as Hometown Holiday, Trunk or Treat and in local parades. She's a member of the National Honor Society and a recipient of class scholarships for her freshmen, sophomore and junior years.

When she graduates this spring, she plans to attend Lake Area Technical Institute for Agriculture Livestock Production and Management. Her goal is to return home to help with the family farm. Congratulations to Audrey, and FEM Electric wishes her the best of luck!

Jessica Hadrick also won a \$500 FEM Electric Scholarship. She is a senior at Faulkton High School, and is the daughter of Trisha and David Hadrick.

Jessica is involved in numerous activities, such as oral interpretation, drama, band, student government, FFA, competitive cheer, and track. She is also a National Honor Society member, and on the Honor Roll.

After graduation, Jessica plans to attend SDSU for Human Biology as she plans to pursue a career in the surgical field. FEM Electric congratulates Jessica on her hard work, and wishes her the best on her future plans!



Uncover Your Energy's Roots!



South Dakota Rural Electric **YOUTH EXCURSION** July 20-22, 2026



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

All area high school freshmen and sophomores that go to school in FEM Electric's territory are eligible to apply.


For More Information Contact:

Crystal Thorson
thorson@femelectric.coop
FEM Electric Association, Inc.
800 5th Ave.
Ipswich, SD 57451
605-426-6891
www.femelectric.coop/youth-excursion

Application Deadline: June 1, 2026

*FEM Electric will provide transportation, lodging, meals, entertainment and sightseeing events. Students are required to supply their own personal/shopping money.





MAY 18
Voter Registration
Deadline for Primary
Election
5 p.m.
(South Dakota)

JUNE 1
Last Day to Request
Absentee Ballot.
5 p.m.
(South Dakota)

JUNE 2
Primary Election
7 a.m.-7 p.m.
(South Dakota)

Photo by Shutterstock

MAY 2-10
Rustic Designs & More Spring
Show, Flea Market
41450 264th St.
Ethan, SD
605-770-2411

MAY 2
Consignment Auction
7 a.m. Gates Open
10 a.m. Auction
Prairie Village
Madison, SD

MAY 2
Cinco de Mayo Fiesta
2-8 p.m.
Milbank, SD
605-432-6656

MAY 3
Prairie Village Opening Day
2 p.m. Train Ride
Prairie Village
Madison, SD

MAY 6-7
Energize! Exploring Innovative
Rural Communities Conference
Hosted by SDSU Extension
Community Vitality
Community Center
Wall, SD
extension.sdstate.edu/energize

MAY 9
1880 Train Opens
Hill City, SD

MAY 15-17
Open House Weekend
Free Entrance
Custer State Park
Custer, SD

MAY 16
2nd Annual Bird Bash
8 a.m.-1 p.m.
Bear Butte State Park
Sturgis, SD
605-390-2901
valleyhummingbird@yahoo.com

MAY 23
Free Christian Men's Event
8 a.m.-2 p.m.
The Barn at Aspen Acres
Spearfish, SD
Register: RiseUpMen.com

MAY 30
Familyfest Fun Cruise
& SDSC Safety Fair
9 a.m.-2 p.m.
Bucket Trucks, Safety & More
Sioux Falls, SD
thehoodmagazine.com/ff-faqs/

MAY 30
Frühlingsfest
Spring Street Market
1-5 p.m.
Main Street Square
Rapid City, SD
605-718-8484

MAY 30
Miss Prairie Village/Miss
Prairie Princess Pageant
6:30 p.m.
Lawrence Welk Opera House
Prairie Village
Madison, SD

JUNE 4-6
Black Hills Quilt Show
Thurs. 5-8 p.m.
Fri. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Rushmore Hall
at the Monument
Rapid City, SD

JUNE 6
Eureka Citywide
Rummage Sale
8 a.m.
Eureka, SD
605-230-1777

JUNE 13
Luce Pioneer Day
10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Rope & Candle Making, Butter
Churning, Dutch Oven Cooking
Lake Herman State Park
Madison, SD
605-880-5077

JUNE 19-20
77th Annual Czech Days
Tabor, SD
www.taborczechdays.com

JUNE 19-21
Ipswich Trail Days
Ipswich, SD
ipswichtraildays.com

JUNE 26-27
Buckhorn Rodeo
Britton, SD
605-880-5077

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: 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.