

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

Pages 12-13

Northern Electric remains a strong member-owned cooperative 75 years after the first annual meeting



Ben Dunsmoor
Editor

On September 13 the members of Northern Electric Cooperative will get together to learn about their cooperative and take care of co-op business just like members did at the first meeting 75 years ago. Since that first meeting in 1948, the miles of line the co-op maintains has changed, the number of co-op members has changed, and the cost of a kilowatt-hour has changed. But something that hasn't changed is the fact that Northern Electric is still a local member-owned cooperative that is operated by our neighbors, our friends, and our family members.

The annual meeting is a time for members to select the leaders of the co-op and to get important information about the operation of their cooperative.

One of the main functions of the annual meeting is to elect members to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is the governing body that meets every month to lead the operation of the cooperative. There are three candidates who have filed petitions to run for the vacant board seat during this year's annual meeting. Board President Donna Sharp has reached her term limit of serving three consecutive three-year terms and her seat in District 5 is open. Members of District 5 will vote at the headquarters office in Bath before this year's annual meeting for one of the candidates to represent their district. Scott Sperry of Bath, Brian Sharp of Bath, and Beth

Locken of Aberdeen have all filed petitions to run for the open seat. The election for District 5 will be one of the most important business items at the 75th annual meeting. There is more information about the candidates and their backgrounds on **pages 6-7** of this issue.

The annual meeting is also a time to learn about the financial condition of the cooperative. The full financial report is printed in the annual report which is inserted into the middle of this issue of *Cooperative Connections*. That report lists the audited financial statements of the cooperative from 2021. These reports will be highlighted during the business meeting and members who are present on September 13 will be asked to approve the financial report.

The 75th annual meeting of Northern Electric Cooperative is also an opportunity for the co-op to show its appreciation to the members of the co-op. A free drive-through meal for members and guests will be provided at the Bath headquarters building from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. before the business meeting begins on September 13. We implemented a drive-through meal during the 2021 annual meeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic and it was a huge success, so we are trying it again this year. The drive-through set up allows busy families and busy farmers to stop by the co-op to grab a free meal and get on with the activities they have planned for the evening. We know everyone's lives are filled with events and the sit-down meal doesn't always work for many members. It is the reason we are sticking with the drive-through meal again in 2022.

The annual meeting is a time for members to select the leaders of the co-op and to get important information about the operation of their cooperative. It is what members expected when the first meeting was held in 1948 and it is what members still expect 75 years later. It is the sign of strong member-owned cooperative.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

NORTHERN ELECTRIC

(USPS 396-040)

Board President: Donna Sharp

Board of Directors

Nolan Wipf - Vice President
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 B.J. Hansen
 Todd Hettich
 Kirk Schaunaman
 Mike Traxinger

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 info@northernelectric.coop

Chief Financial Officer: Lorisa Rudolph

Operations Manager: Jerry Weber

Manager of Member Services: Russel Ulmer

Manager of Information Technology: Derek Gorecki

Communications Director: Ben Dunsmoor
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Executive Secretary: Kay Albrecht

Northern Electric Cooperative Connections is the monthly publication for the members of Northern Electric Cooperative, PO Box 457, Bath, SD 57427. Families subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. The purpose of Northern Electric Cooperative Connections is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on electric cooperative matters and better rural living.

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Northern Electric Cooperative's regular board meeting was held July 22, 2022, at the Northern Electric Cooperative, Inc. Redfield office, in Redfield, SD with all directors present. As the first order of business, the Board approved the June 17, 2022, minutes and June expenditures. The Board then reviewed and accepted monthly reports by management.

East River Director Kirk Schaunaman reported on actions taken by the East River Board at the July 7, 2022, meeting. General Manager Char Hager reported on the East River MAC Meeting held July 6, 2022. Director Nolan Wipf reported on the South Dakota Rural Electric Association board meeting held June 23-24, 2022. Directors Ronald Kaaz, Kirk Schaunaman, Nolan Wipf, Donna Sharp and General Manager/CEO Char Hager reported on the 2022 CFC Forum, June 20-22, Boston, MA.

MANAGER'S REPORT

General Manager Char Hager's report to the board included the following items:

- Update on development projects.
- Update on Rural Electric Economic Development (REED) revolving loan fund.
- Legal and Legislative Report.
- Discussion on staff preparations for the Northern Electric Annual Meeting, September 13, 2022, at the Bath Office.
- Reminded directors of the East River

Annual Meeting in Sioux Falls on September 7, 2022.

- Reminded directors of the 2022 NRECA Regional 5 & 6 Meeting, September 21-23, in Minneapolis, MN.

BOARD REPORT

The board considered and/or acted upon the following:

1. Approved date and time of the next regular board meeting for 8:30 a.m. on Monday, August 22, 2022.
2. Approved payment of legal fees for Harvey Oliver in the amount of \$2,979.44.
3. Approved Work Order Inventories #22-06 for \$331,780.45 and #22-06MC for \$323,109.11 to be submitted to the Rural Utilities Service for reimbursement from loan funds for electric plant construction already completed.
4. Approved annual special and general capital credit retirements for members age 70 and over. Estimated retirements will total \$349,413.83.
5. Appointed the Election & Credentials Committee for the 2022 NEC Annual Meeting. Compensation was set at \$100 plus mileage.

Talk to your director or co-op manager if you have questions on these matters.

FINANCIAL REPORT

	June-22	June-21
kWh Sales	20,530,313 kWh	25,462,730 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$2,168,094	\$2,497,181
Total Cost of Service	\$2,178,260	\$2,432,699
Operating Margins.....	(\$10,165)	\$64,482
Year to Date Margins	\$510,141	\$229,602

RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE MONTHLY USAGE AND BILL

JUNE-2022.....	1,404 kWh.....	\$185.09.....	0.1318 per kWh
JUNE-2021.....	1,473 kWh.....	\$191.05.....	0.1297 per kWh

Wholesale power cost, taxes, interest, and depreciation account for 82.5% of NEC's total cost of service.

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

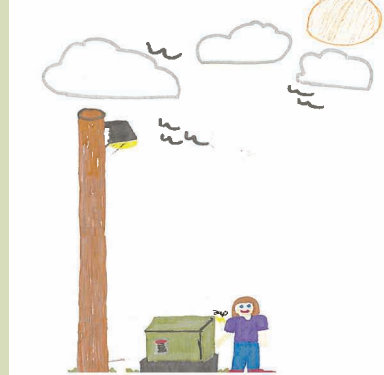
A group of high school students recently gathered together to take a trip and learn how electricity is produced and how it is used to power their homes, farms, appliances and local businesses.

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.



Three candidates run for District 5

The election for the open Board of Directors District 5 seat will be held prior to the Annual Meeting on September 13 at the Bath headquarters

Ben Dunsmoor

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Three candidates have filed valid petitions to run for the open District 5 seat on the Northern Electric Board of Directors. Scott Sperry of Bath, Brian Sharp of Bath, and Beth Locken of Aberdeen will appear on the ballot on September 13. The winning candidate will replace Board President Donna Sharp who has reached her term limit. Only members of District 5 can vote from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 13, at the cooperative headquarters in Bath. The candidate with the most votes will win. The winner will be announced after the annual business meeting and on the co-op's website and social media accounts. ■

SCOTT SPERRY



Scott Sperry is a lifelong member of Northern Electric Cooperative. He is a fourth-generation farmer who raises corn and soybeans

and operates a hog finishing unit. Sperry's grandparents were the second farm energized when the co-op began electrifying rural Brown County in the 1940s. He hopes to contribute to the development of the cooperative if he is elected to the District 5 seat.

"I am looking forward to making a difference in my rural community and working with my neighbors to assist Northern Electric in continuing to provide safe, reliable, and economical electricity for future generations," Sperry said.

Sperry is active in many local and state boards. Sperry is a delegate for Agtegra Cooperative, clerk of the Bath Township Board, Vice President for the South Brown Soil Conservation District Board, and a member of both the South Dakota Corn Growers Association and the South Dakota Soybean Association. Sperry believes his experience serving other local boards and organizations and his lifelong membership with Northern Electric make him a worthy candidate for the Board of Directors.

"My top priority is to assist the cooperative in continuing to provide reliable and safe electricity at an affordable rate," Sperry said. "I don't want brownouts and rolling

blackouts which affect everyone from business owners to families. I know how power restrictions negatively impact farming. I want to be an active participant in helping to continue our reliable power supply by serving on the Board of Directors.”

Sperry and his wife Kathy live in Bath and have five adult children and three grandchildren.

BRIAN SHARP



Brian Sharp has a long resume of service to his community. He would also like to serve his local electric cooperative as a board

member in District 5.

“I understand the importance of rural electric cooperatives and want to be able to contribute to the furthering of their mission,” Sharp said.

Sharp is the co-owner and operator of Sharp’s Inc. family farm in Bath. He raises crops and livestock with his wife, parents, brother, and sister-in-law. His oldest son works for a cooperatively owned cheese manufacturer in Minnesota and his youngest son attends South Dakota State University.

Sharp is currently the Vice President of the Aberdeen School Board and has served on the school board since 2005. Sharp also serves on the Brown County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), the Brown County Communications Council, the Brown County Search and Rescue Team, and is a volunteer with

Brown County 4-H. He is looking forward to getting involved with the Northern Electric Cooperative Board of Directors if he is elected to the open seat in District 5.

“I look forward to learning more about the generation and supply of electricity in our region,” Sharp said.

Sharp’s mother, Donna, is currently serving District 5 as the President of the Northern Electric Cooperative Board of Directors. His father, Gary, also served on the board from 2004-2013 and was president of the board for five years.

BETH LOCKEN



Beth Locken has grown up around cooperatives, works for a cooperative, and is an advocate for the cooperative business model.

She would also like to serve her cooperative and its members which is the reason she is running for a seat on the Northern Electric Board of Directors.

“I have always seen the benefits cooperatives provide to member-owners and communities by providing safe, reliable services along with community outreach,” Locken said. “When I learned of the opening on the Board of Directors, I was excited by the opportunity to have a voice at the table for the district and communities served by the cooperative.”

Locken is the Director of Safety and Environmental at Agtegra Cooperative in Aberdeen. She has worked for Agtegra for the past

12 years and is looking forward to using her experience to benefit the members of Northern Electric if she is elected to fill the open board seat in District 5.

“With my strong background in safety and community outreach, I am excited to bring my experience and perspective to the board and ensure the cooperative continues to be a strong and positive resource,” Locken said.

Locken and her husband, Nathan, have three daughters and reside in Aberdeen. They enjoy camping, fishing, and participating in community outreach events.

VOTING PROCEDURES

- The election for the open District 5 seat will take place from **5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 13**, prior to the annual meeting.
- Voting will be held at the **cooperative headquarters building in Bath**.
- Only Northern Electric **members who reside in District 5 are eligible to vote in the election**. District 5 generally includes an area from eastern Aberdeen to the community of Groton. Please call 605-225-0310 prior to September 13 to confirm you live in District 5.
- **Paper ballots will be distributed to members of District 5** who arrive at the headquarters building in person from 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 13.
- **The candidate who receives the most votes will win the election**. The winner will be announced at the conclusion of the annual business meeting.



Sunflower commodity prices are making farmers smile

Billy Gibson

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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.



RIDERS ARE THE REASON

Heather Westby (purple helmet) mounts her horse before competing in the Equestrian Special Olympics event at SPURS on August 1.

SPURS hosts Equestrian Special Olympics event to celebrate 30th anniversary

Ben Dunsmoor

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Dozens of riders with special needs confidently hopped onto their horses at SPURS Therapeutic Riding Center on August 1 to show off their skills. It was the riders' time to shine. It was their opportunity to compete in front of family and friends. It was their Super Bowl.

"The rider is the reason is our slogan, so it is really cool to have a day that is all about them and to celebrate them," SPURS Executive Assistant Kristin Jobe said.

The day was a celebration of the riders, the volunteers, and an organization that has been dedicated to improving the lives of people with disabilities since 1992. SPURS typically sends riders to Huron every summer for the Equestrian Special Olympics event which is held on the fairgrounds at the State Fair. However, due to construction in Huron and several other factors, SPURS decided to host its own event to showcase local riders and celebrate the 30th anniversary of the organization. Northern Electric Cooperative partnered with East River Electric Power Cooperative

and Basin Electric Power Cooperative to sponsor the event.

"We wanted to include the community because we could not do what we do without the community," Vice President of the SPURS Board of Directors Robin Mitchell said. "It is nice to have it here to remind people what SPURS is all about."

The event featured 40 riders who had been working on their horseback riding skills for more than ten weeks. Riders like 30-year-old Heather Westby competed in all the events. Westby has been riding horses at SPURS since she was two years old.



A young rider completes one of the stations in the SPURS outdoor arena.

“It is a great place, and you can meet some really cool people and horses,” Westby said.

Westby has cerebral palsy and was one of the first riders who started coming to SPURS in the early 1990s. Westby’s father said that SPURS has been an invaluable resource for his daughter.

“When she can’t come to SPURS for a week we hear about it,” Ron Westby said. “They are all good people (at SPURS). A lot of big hearts out here.”

The riders who are served by SPURS say the horses and the people provide them with support and a sense of peace when they come to the riding center for regular sessions.

“It helps me relax and be around my friends,” rider Josh Johnson said.

Johnson’s mother, Molly Johnson, said SPURS has been an asset for her son who has been riding for the past eight years. She is also grateful that the equestrian event was held in Aberdeen this year so more people can experience it.

RIDERS AND VOLUNTEERS SAY SPURS HAS BEEN AN INVALUABLE ASSET FOR THEIR FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

“It is better when it is local because people get to see what SPURS is about and the impact that it has,” Molly Johnson said. “You see the impact by being here.”

The volunteers at SPURS also see the impact through the work they do all year long.

“I truly believe horses have a way of connecting with not just disabled people but everyone,” Robin Mitchell said. “The horse has a way of bonding with them, and I can see the good it has done.”

It is why organizers were glad to bring the Equestrian Special Olympics event to Aberdeen, so more people can see the riders show off their skills.

“From seeing the smiles on the riders’ faces and seeing them experience it, it is amazing,” Jobe said.

Because the riders were the reason in the arena in August, and they have been the reason for the past 30 years.



Josh Johnson rides out of the arena after completing an event during the Equestrian Special Olympics event at SPURS in Aberdeen.

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

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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.

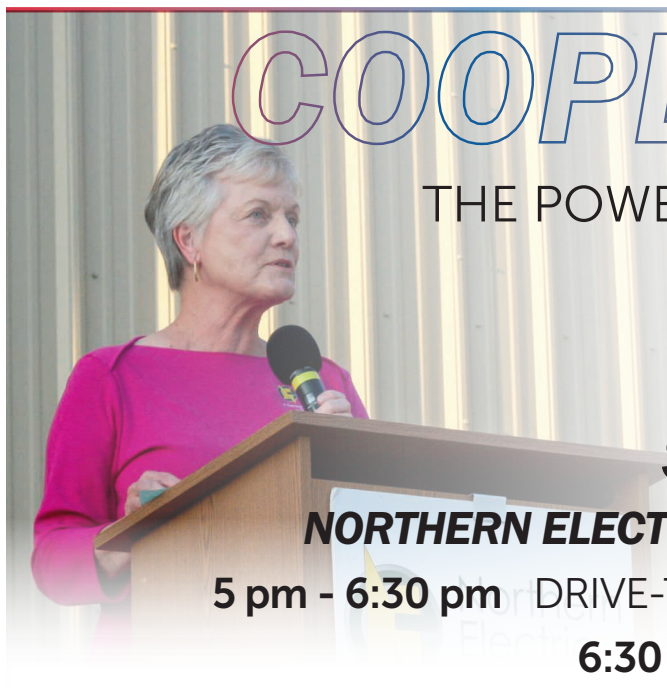
“You don’t have to do a whole lot. I just let the flavor of the meat speak for itself,” he said. “Honestly, I never

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.”



COOPERATIVES

THE POWER OF WORKING TOGETHER

75th ANNUAL MEETING

SEPTEMBER 13, 2022
NORTHERN ELECTRIC HEADQUARTERS, BATH, SD
5 pm - 6:30 pm DRIVE-THRU MEAL & DISTRICT 5 VOTING
6:30 pm ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

OFFICIAL NOTICE

MEMBERS OF NORTHERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

The Annual Meeting of the members of Northern Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held at the headquarters building in rural Bath, State of South Dakota, on the 13th day of September 2022, at 6:30 p.m. to take action on the following matters:

1. APPROVAL OF 2021 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
2. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT
3. ELECTION AND SEATING OF DIRECTORS

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that although Directors for District 2, 5, and 9 will be elected by the membership at the meeting, paper ballots will only need to be cast in the District 5 election. Incumbent directors Todd Hettich (District 2) and Nolan Wipf (District 9) are the only eligible candidates for their Districts. Since no other nominations can be submitted, the candidates in Districts 2 and 9 will be automatically elected at the annual meeting.

2022 NORTHERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE BOARD OF DIRECTOR CANDIDATES

DISTRICT 2

Todd Hettich
Mina, SD

DISTRICT 5

Scott Sperry
Bath, SD

Brian Sharp
Bath, SD

Beth Locken
Aberdeen, SD

DISTRICT 9

Nolan Wipf
Hitchcock, SD

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the Secretary has posted such nominations in the principal office of the Cooperative.

Ronald Kaaz
Secretary

July 22, 2022

Minutes of 2021 Northern Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting

Pursuant to the notice to all members, the 74th Annual Meeting of the membership of Northern Electric Cooperative, Inc., was held at the Northern Electric Cooperative, Inc. headquarters rural Bath, SD, on the 21st day of September 2021, at 6:30 p.m. Registration and voting from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Vice President Nolan Wipf welcomed the members to the 2021 annual meeting of Northern Electric Cooperative. Wipf thanked the members for attending the meeting and for their dedication and commitment to the cooperative.

Vice President Nolan Wipf thanked East River Electric Power Cooperative Video/AV Coordinator Bob Gale for providing the audio equipment for the meeting. Wipf also thanked Scotty's Drive-In and Shagan Pit for providing the wonderful meal.

Following the National Anthem, Vice President Nolan Wipf recognized directors and officers of the board.

President Donna Sharp declared a quorum was present, with the official registration being 187.

Sharp gave a report on petitions for nominees. Sharp stated that petitions were received for the following Director candidates: District 3, Ronald Kaaz, Aberdeen, District 8, Francis Esser, Redfield, and District 1, Michael E. Traxinger, Claremont.

President Donna Sharp called for the Secretary's report. Upon motion, the reading of the minutes of the September 22, 2020, Annual Meeting was waived and the minutes, as previously mailed to all the members prior to this meeting,

were approved as printed and mailed.

President Donna Sharp called for the Treasurer's report. Sharp stated that the financial statements printed in the annual report represented an accurate reflection of the audited financial status of the Cooperative, as of December 31, 2020. The treasurer's report was approved as presented.

President Sharp called for any unfinished or old business. There was none.

President Donna Sharp thanked the Board of Directors and all the employees of Northern Electric Cooperative who have worked to overcome many challenges over the past year and having one of the most productive years on record for the cooperative. Northern Electric completed more than \$4 million worth of work plan projects in 2020. The work included burying more than 60 miles of underground line. That is the most line co-op crews have buried in a single year.

Crews also built 20 miles of new overhead line in 2020. All of these projects replaced vintage co-op lines that were built in the 1940's and 1950's and will improve reliability for members.

The annual report distributed at registration outlined other major accomplishments during the past year. Including a project to help 3M with a major expansion at its Aberdeen plant and three new substations that are being built within the cooperative's service territory.

All of these projects were completed successfully despite the challenges of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Three Northern Electric employees celebrating milestone anniversaries with the co-op were recognized for their years of service. Terry Lundberg, Line Foreman, 40 years, Doris Scheuffele, Senior Billing Clerk, 30 years and Nick Nielsen, Assistant Member Services Manager, 10 years.

One new employee who joined the cooperative within the past year was also recognized. William Torrence an apprentice lineman in Redfield.

Mark Sumption was recognized for his nine years of service on the Northern Electric Cooperative Board of Directors by presenting him with a plaque for his dedication to the co-op.

After serving on the Northern Electric Board of Directors for the past nine years Mark reached his term limit and officially finished his duties as a director at the 2021 annual meeting. Mark walked up onto the stage to receive his plaque and delivered a few remarks.

Sharp called for any new business. There was a member with a question. Manager of Member Services Russ Ulmer answered the question. Sharp moved forward with the meeting to take action on the election of directors. Attorney Harvey Oliver explained the voting rules and procedures of the election of directors and explained that the candidates for District 3, 8 and 1 being unopposed, the chair declared the nominees as elected by general consent.

Sharp called for any other business to come before the meeting, there being none, she declared the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m. and thanked all for attending. ■

REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number: _____

Your E-mail Address: _____



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
Germanfest
Fawick Park, Sioux Falls, SD,
siouxfallsistercities.com/event

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

SEPTEMBER 10
Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage
Groton, SD, 605-397-8422

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 24-25
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

OCTOBER 1
Pumpkin Fest
City Park, Groton, SD,
605-397-8422

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