

# Cooperative Connections



**Faulkton mural is  
turning heads**

Pages 8-9

**Co-ops practice  
road safety**

Pages 12-13

The 110-foot mural that towers over the town of Faulkton has attracted attention from across the country

## Energized for the Future

# A Message to Our Members



**Matt Hotzler**

Manager  
matth@h-delectric.coop



**Bert Rogness**

Board President  
bertr@h-delectric.coop

We invite you to attend your cooperative's annual meeting on Tuesday, March 23, 2021, at the H-D headquarters just south of Clear Lake, S.D., off Hwy 15. Registration begins at 6:30 p.m., the business meeting will begin at 7 p.m. This year, because of COVID-19, we will not be serving a meal but will be giving a \$20 bill credit for each membership that registers. Don't forget we will also have a \$1000 bill credit if the member is in attendance and their name is drawn from the entire membership. Each year we draw a name and if no one wins we add \$100. We haven't had a winner for a while now so we have capped the balance at \$1,000 and started a second drawing for \$100.

The year 2020 will go down in history as a memorable year as we addressed the COVID-19 pandemic. Not sure what the virus will bring in 2021 but we continue to be cautious to keep our employees safe.

Despite the pandemic, we accomplished much over the year. Here are some of the highlights.

- **Rates** – No Rate increase for 2020. None expected for 2021.
- **Operations** – We installed over 38 miles of new underground line. Twenty-seven miles of replacement of existing line and 11 miles of new line installed. This year with new load growth, we built almost equal amounts of three-phase and single-phase line both just over 19 miles. We added 85 new services and disconnected or retired 21 for a net gain of 64 services. For the 10 years from 2010 to 2019, we averaged a net gain of 24 services annually and had a max of 37 in the highest year. So you can see 64 was like doing two years' worth of service in a single year.
- **Member Services** – We completed a total of 914 service orders, 665 were wiring service orders that generated \$405,000 in revenue and \$41,000 in non-operating margins.
- **COVID-19 Pandemic** – We successfully transitioned our work practices to deal with the partial remote working out of the office or social distancing and separating crews in a busy year to carry out the work of an extremely busy year.
- **Electric Car** – We purchased a 2020 Model 3 Tesla and have put in our fleet an all-electric car. While we have not been able to showcase the vehicle to our members as planned because of social distancing and limited gatherings. We have gained much-needed knowledge on the strengths and weaknesses of the electric car. Hopefully, we can begin getting the car out for the membership to see soon.
- **Safety** – No Days Away, Restricted or Transfers (DART) employee injuries for our workforce. This is a metric that we monitor and measure if an injury occurs that requires more than minor first aid. Safety needs to remain a top priority in our business.

Overall, we had a great year, we kept on pace and worked through the challenges from the pandemic and will continue to work through any challenges we see as the pandemic continues. Last year's annual meeting was quite different with a drive through meeting, but we were able to meet our cooperative bylaws. While this year's annual meeting won't be as it has in the past either, being held on a Tuesday evening and not having a meal, I hope you will consider attending this year's annual meeting. Who knows you may even win a \$1000 bill credit!

For more information on the annual meeting check out this link on our website at <http://www.h-delectric.coop/content/annual-meeting>.

# H-D Electric

## Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-905)

**General Manager:** Matt Hotzler

### Headquarters Employees

Annie Aberle -

Finance and Administration Manager

Alyssa Gabrielson - Receptionist/Cashier

Michelle Prins - Billing Clerk

Heidi Brewer-Grimlie - Accounting Clerk

Roger Cutshaw - Engineer

Darren Matthies -

Building Property Worker

### Operations

Troy Kwasniewski - Operations Manager

Todd Sprang - Line Foreman

Line Crew

Pat Kirby - Operations Support

Joe Raml - Lead Lineworker

Cody Scarrott - Lineworker

Derek Bille - Lineworker

Kevin Holida - Lead Lineworker

Matt Miller - Equipment Operator/  
Mechanic

Eric Page - Apprentice Lineworker

### Member Services

Tom Lundberg -

Member Services Manager

Erik Eversman - Electrician

Noah Reichling - Electrician

Rick Shea - Electrician

### Board of Directors

President Bert Rogness - Astoria

Vice President Terry Strohfus - Hazel

Secretary Roxanne Bass - Castlewood

Treasurer Steven Hansen - Clear Lake

Dale Williams - Estelline

Casper Niemann - Lake Norden

Kevin DeBoer - Clear Lake

Laurie Seefeldt - Revillo

Todd Moritz - Clear Lake

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Design assistance by SDREA.

## Notice of 2021 Annual Meeting

Dear Member:

March 23, 2021

The regular annual meeting of the members of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held at the H-D Headquarters, Clear Lake, South Dakota on the 23rd day of March 2021 at 7:00 p.m. pursuant to the provisions of Section I, Article VI of the Bylaws of said cooperative to take action upon the following matters:

1. To elect Directors
2. Pass upon reports for the previous fiscal year
3. Transact such business as may come before the meeting.

REGISTRATION OPENS AT 6:30 PM.

Meeting begins at 7 p.m.

Your registration card will be located on the back cover of this newsletter. Please cut it out, sign and present card at the registration table. Your registration card will entitle you to an Official Ballot, \$20 bill credit, a registration gift and a chance to win a prize. Several \$25 energy credits, two \$50 energy credits, one \$100 energy credit, electric grills, and many more wonderful prizes will be awarded. You must be present to win.

A special \$1,000 cash credit to energy bill drawing will be held at the end of the program. The entire membership is entered in this drawing. You must be present to win.

If you are disabled and need reasonable accommodation to have a full and equal enjoyment of this program, please notify the business office at 605-874-2171 or 1-800-358-7233.

Dated this 2nd day of March 2020

Roxanne Bass, Secretary

H-D ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

## Funny Dad Joke of the Month

What rock group has four men that do not sing?  
Mount Rushmore

Why did the scarecrow win an award?  
Because he was outstanding in his field!

If you have a funny dad joke, email us at info@h-delectric.coop for a chance to be featured in our next magazine.

## Statistical Report

	December 2019	December 2020
<b>Customers</b>	3,654	3,719
<b>Amount Collected</b>	\$1,124,953	\$1,031,706
<b>Average Bill</b>	\$307.87	\$277.41
<b>Average Kilowatt-Hour</b>	3,141	2,714
<b>Kilowatt-Hours Purchased</b>	12,181,598	11,028,119
<b>Kilowatt-Hours Sold</b>	11,476,178	10,093,927

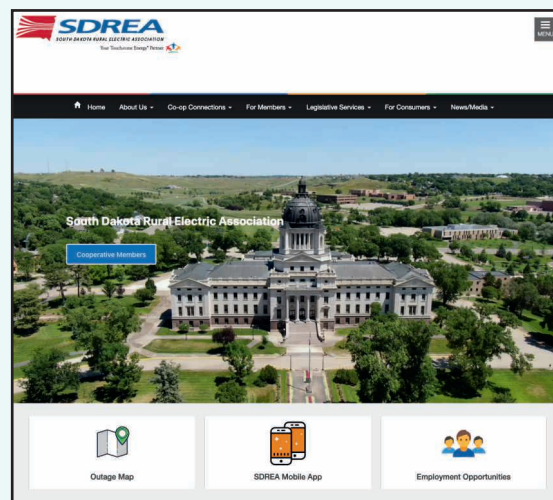
## Five Electrical Dangers in Your Home

Of all the hazards that exist around your home, getting shocked by electricity is one that should not be taken lightly. Depending on the level of electrical current, contact with electricity can result in something as innocuous (but still painful) as a mild shock to more severe injuries like nerve damage and burns. In some circumstances, it can even cause cardiac arrest and death. Here's a list of some of the most common shock risks inside a home.

- **Appliances.** Most shocks from appliances occur when people are trying to repair them. It's not enough to just turn off an appliance before attempting to work on it – you also need to unplug it to reduce risk. Large appliances are responsible for 18 percent of consumer product-related electrical accidents; small appliances account for 12 percent. There's also danger if your appliance comes into contact with water. Many of these hazards can be avoided by using a ground-fault circuit interrupter. A GFCI is a protective device installed on electrical outlets, primarily used where water is present.
- **Ladders.** Typically, ladders present a falling hazard, but 8 percent of consumer product-related electrical shocks were also related to ladders. Electrocutation typically happens when the ladder makes contact with electrical wires. Before you use a ladder, make sure you can clearly see all power lines in the area, including those that may be hidden by tree branches. Ensure that the ladder is at least 10 feet away from them.
- **Power tools.** Power tools account for 9 percent of consumer product-related shocks. When you use power tools that are not double-insulated, are damaged or have damaged cords, you increase your chances of being injured. The chance of danger also increases when you use incompatible cords with power tools, use power tools incorrectly or use them in wet conditions. This is another situation in which GFCIs can help.
- **Electrical outlets and extension cords.** Inserting anything that doesn't belong – screwdrivers, knives, fingers or toy cars - into an electrical outlet can result in a dangerous electrical contact. Use cover plates that fit properly and safety covers on all outlets. By installing tamper-resistant receptacles, outlets will have permanent security against foreign objects being inserted into the slots. Any broken, loose or worn-out plugs, switches and light fixtures should be replaced immediately.

## Visit the new SDREA.coop

Want to know more about South Dakota's rural electric cooperative system? Check out our newly redesigned website at [www.sdrea.coop](http://www.sdrea.coop). You'll find lots of useful information about our generation, transmission and distribution systems, energy efficiency ideas, legislative issues that impact electric rates, a statewide outage map and much more.



## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



**"Don't hit the pole! Be safe!"**

**Monroe Steiner, 6 years old**

Monroe is the daughter of Brandon and Jen Steiner of Lake City, SD. They are members of Lake Region Electric.

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.

# Super Seafood Recipes

## Sheet Pan Fish and Chips

1/4 cup buttermilk	1 tablespoon oil
5 teaspoons OLD BAY® Seasoning, divided	1/4 cup flour
1 pound cod fillets, cut into 4x2-inch pieces	1 egg
2 large russet potatoes, cut into wedges (about 1-1/2 pounds)	1 cup cornflake crumbs
	McCormick® Tartar Sauce

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Mix buttermilk and 1 teaspoon of the OLD BAY in large resealable plastic bag. Add fish, then seal the bag. Refrigerate for 20 minutes. Toss potatoes and oil into large bowl. Sprinkle with another 2 teaspoons of OLD BAY; toss to coat evenly. Spread potatoes in single layer on foil-lined 15x10x1-inch baking pan that has been sprayed with no-stick cooking spray. Bake 25 minutes, turning potatoes halfway through. Remove pan from oven. Push potatoes to outside edge of the pan. Set aside. Place flour in a shallow dish. Beat egg, another 1 teaspoon of OLD BAY and 1 teaspoon water in a separate shallow dish. Mix cornflake crumbs and remaining 1 teaspoon OLD BAY in another shallow dish. Remove fish from the buttermilk mixture, allowing excess to drip off into bag. Coat fish in flour, shaking off excess flour. Dip in egg mixture, then press into the cornflake mixture until evenly coated. Discard any remaining flour, egg and cornflake mixtures. Place fish on a wire rack in center of pan with the potatoes. Bake 15 minutes or until fish is golden brown and flakes easily with a fork and potatoes are tender. Serve fish with potatoes and tartar sauce, if desired.

[www.mccormick.com](http://www.mccormick.com)

## Salmon Cheese Balls

1 16 oz. can of salmon	1 T. salt
8 oz. cream cheese	1 T. lemon juice
1 T. chopped onion	1 T. horseradish

Mix all ingredients together and shape into individual balls. Roll balls in chopped pecans and serve with crackers. Chill before and after shaping into a ball.

**Denene Miles, Doland, SD**

## Shrimp Fettuccine with Pesto

15 extra large shrimp	comes in gluten free variety)
6 cloves of garlic	2-6.7 oz. jars of basil pesto
Extra virgin olive oil	Finely shredded parmesan cheese
12 oz. box of fettuccine (also	

Peel and chop garlic until finely diced. In large saute pan, pour a couple of tbsps. of extra virgin olive oil. Add shrimp (shelled and wiped dry with a paper towel). Cook until orange and slightly browned on each side (2-3 minutes per side). Add garlic and cook until light brown (do not over cook or garlic becomes bitter). Put on plate. Fill saute pan 3/4 full with cold water and bring to a rolling boil. Add entire box of pasta and cook 12 minutes. Stir to make sure pasta has separated. Drain in colander. Put the pasta, shrimp and garlic back into the saute pan. Add two jars of pesto sauce. Cook until heated. When serving, add parmesan cheese on top. Serves 4-6. Shrimp & Garlic with Cocktail Sauce: Prepare shrimp and garlic as directed above. Cool. Serve with cocktail sauce.

**Sue Nipe, Sioux Falls, SD**

## Parmesan Baked Salmon

1/4 c mayo	4 salmon fillets
2 T. Parmesan Cheese	2 t. lemon juice
1/8 t. ground red pepper (cayenne)	10 crackers, crushed

Mix the mayo, cheese and pepper. Place salmon on foil on a cooking sheet. Drizzle with lemon juice. Top with cheese mixture. Sprinkle on cracker crumbs. Bake at 400 for 15 minutes. Then enjoy!

**Julie and Jared Frank, Sioux Falls, SD**

Please send your favorite beverage 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 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

# Minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting

Due to the nature of the 2020 annual meeting being held in a drive-thru format, the 2019 annual meeting minutes will be approved through vote at the 78th annual meeting of the members.

**Minutes of the 76th annual meeting of the members of H-D Electric Cooperative Inc., held on Saturday, March 23, 2019 at 1:00 o'clock p.m. at the headquarters building of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc., Clear Lake, county of Deuel, state of South Dakota.**

The 76th annual meeting of the members of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. was held at the Headquarter Building of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc., Clear Lake, Deuel County, South Dakota, on Saturday, March 23, 2019, at 1:00 o'clock p.m., pursuant to the notice of the annual meeting duly mailed to all members.

The President of the Board, Mr. Bert Rogness, called the meeting to order at 1:00 o'clock p.m. following a dinner served to the member and open house for the new headquarters building.

Mr. Bert Rogness, President of the Board, led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Two students from Deuel School, Wyatt Giese and Elizabeth DeBoer led the members in singing the National Anthem. Mr. Bert Rogness gave the invocation.

The President of the board, Mr. Bert Rogness, acted as the Chairman of the meeting and reported a quorum of 124 members were present. A quorum being present, Mr. Bert Rogness, Chairman, announced the meeting was duly convened.

Mr. Bert Rogness introduced the former directors who were present, Doyle Thompson and Vernon Tetzlaff. He thanked the former board members for attending the membership meeting. Mr. Bert Rogness also introduced Tom Boyko, general manager of East River Electric Cooperative, Inc. and Mike Jaspers, Economic Development Director of East River Electric Cooperative, Inc and Tom Jones from Rural Utilities Services (RUS).

Mr. Bert Rogness introduced each of the current board members present and indicated the date they began their service for H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. In addition, he introduced the manager, Mr. Matthew Hotzler and the project attorney, Craig D. Evenson.

Mr. Wayne TeKrony, secretary read the notice and proof of mailing for the annual meeting.

Mr. Bert Rogness referred the members to the minutes of the 75th annual meeting of the members on March 24, 2018, printed in the H-D Electric Cooperative Connections and mailed to the members. On motion duly made, seconded and carried, the minutes of the March 24, 2018 annual meeting, were approved.

The panel consisting of Mr. Bert Rogness, President, Mr. Matthew Hotzler, manager, and Mr. Steve Hansen, Treasurer, presented the H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. Annual Report with the aid of a power point presentation.

Mr. Matthew Hotzler, General Manager, presented a discussion

of the cooperative business model detailing that the cooperative is member focused and invests in the membership's future. He presented information in regards to the new headquarters building and the old pole yard closure which will increase the efficiency of the operations department. He discussed the community room and the plan to sell the old headquarters building. In addition, Mr. Hotzler discussed the four year construction work plan and the aged asset retirement program. He explained to the members that the cooperative plans on replacing lines from the 40s and 50s over a 20- year time frame. The new lines will increase the safety, capacity, accommodate new load requirements and increase the reliability of the cooperative's facilities.

Mr. Hansen, treasurer, reviewed the financial report which was available to the members in the cooperative connections publication. Mr. Hansen reported that there was growth in the number of services. Mr. Hansen discussed revenue and expense in the operating and non-operating margins from the financial statements. He also discussed the capital credits, the balance sheet and the power costs from Basin and East River Electric Cooperative.

Mr. Bert Rogness, Director from East River Electric Cooperative, Inc. presented a report from East River including a video report from East River's General Manager, Tom Boyko. Mr. Tom Boyko presented that Basin Electric has taken an all of the above generation strategy which includes renewable resources. 18% of the Basin generation comes from WAPA allocations from the dams on the Missouri River and 20% from wind energy sources. East River has continued their campaign for farm equipment contact safety and cyber security keeping the critical infrastructure safe. Mr. Boyko discussed the clean power plan replacement rule which will be a more sustainable solution. He also introduced Mike Jaspers to the membership who will be working with Economic Development. Last, he discussed charitable giving within the member territory, which also includes educational programming.

In addition, Mr. Rogness gave an oral report. He discussed the aged asset replacement for East River and how that will affect rates. He discussed the importance of East River for H-D Electric's growth and he reported regarding the audit of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. Basin Electric subsidiary, Dakota Gasification company's, portfolio has diversified. Basin has been making their operations leaner through a voluntary retirement program. The current financial forecasts about 3% annual increase in rates, however, 2019 will see no increase. There was discussion in regards to small renewables, green credits and excess renewable energy credits. Last, he discussed youth related events, including that Wyatt Giese was elected to the NRECA Youth Council and went to Washington twice in that capacity.

Mr. Steve Hansen gave an SDREA update. He discussed the annual youth trip to Basin and Washington, the philosophy of seeing safety as an investment, and using the RESAP and audit of safety

programs at H-D Electric. Again in 2018, H-D Electric participated in that program and demonstrated successful safety achievement.

Mr. Matthew Hotzler discussed updating of technology and how it requires cyber security. He reported that H-D Electric is doing its due diligence to keep information safe. They have gained advantages for outage management with radio frequency transmission. He reported the cooperative installed 28 miles of underground line in 2018. He then introduced the cooperative employees.

Mr. Bert Rogness advised the membership that the financial report needs to be accepted by resolution.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried, it was resolved that the financial report for H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. for 2018 shall be and hereby is approved.

Mr. Bert Rogness then introduced the project attorney, Craig D. Evenson for instruction on the voting process. Mr. Craig D. Evenson advised the membership that candidates filing petitions are the following:

- Terry Strohfus from District 1

- Roxanne Bass from District 2

- Kevin DeBoer from District 6

On motion duly made, seconded and carried, the following directors were elected as the directors for H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. for a term of three years:

- District 1 - Terry Strohfus

- District 2 - Roxanne Bass

- District 6 - Kevin DeBoer

Mr. Rogness asked if there was any old business. There was none.

Mr. Rogness asked the members if there was any new business. There was none.

Mr. Rogness then introduced Mr. Troy Kwasniewski and Ms. Heidi Brewer-Grimlie to draw for door prizes.

Mr. Rogness then asked for a motion to adjourn. On motion duly made, seconded and carried the meeting adjourned.

# Minutes of the 2020 Annual Meeting

**Minutes of the 77th annual meeting of the members of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc., held on Thursday, August 27, 2020 at 1:00 o'clock p.m. at the headquarters building of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc., Clear Lake, County of Deuel, state of South Dakota.**

The 77th annual meeting of the members of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. was held at the Headquarters Building of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc., Clear Lake, Deuel County, South Dakota, on Thursday, August 27, 2020, at 1:00 o'clock p.m. until 7:00 p.m., pursuant to the notice of the annual meeting duly mailed to all members. The meeting was held in a drive-thru format in order to comply with the Covid-19 Pandemic guidelines and mitigation recommendations. Members were able to attend either the Clear Lake Headquarters parking lot or the Hayti Outpost parking lot.

The President of the Board, Mr. Bert Rogness, called the meeting to order at 1:00 o'clock p.m. beginning the business of the Drive-Thru Meeting.

The President of the board, Mr. Bert Rogness, acted as the Chairman of the meeting and reported a quorum of 307

members participating in the drive-thru meeting. A quorum being present, Mr. Bert Rogness, Chairman, announced the meeting was duly convened.

At the drive-thru meeting, members were given ballots for the election of directors and information in relation to the Operations of the Coop. The proof of mailing of the Notice of the Annual Meeting, being burdensome to read to all who drove through, was not read. Attached is the Notice and Proof of mailing for the annual meeting.

Mr. Bert Rogness referred the members to the minutes of the 76th annual meeting of the members on March 23, 2019, printed in the H-D Electric Cooperative Connections and mailed to the members. There were no objections to the minutes. Due to the nature of the drive-thru meeting, the minutes of the 76th annual meeting of the members will be approved through vote at the 78th annual meeting of the members.

The Operating Summary, Balance Sheet and Financial Report for 2019 was printed in the H-D Electric Cooperative Connections and mailed to the members.

There were no objections to the Operating Summary, Balance Sheet and Financial

Report. Due to the nature of the drive-thru meeting, the minutes of the 76th annual meeting of the members will be approved through vote at the 78th annual meeting of the members.

All Members who registered for the Meeting were advised that candidates filing petitions are as follows:

- Todd Moritz and Nathan Palm from District 3
- Laurie Seefeldt from District 2
- Alvin Kangas and Todd Moritz from District 9

Votes were cast for the District 3, 4 and 9 director candidates, the following were elected as the directors for H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. for a term of three years:

- District 3 - Todd Moritz
- District 4 - Laurie Seefeldt
- District 9 - Casper Nieman

Mr. Rogness, noting the time of the 77th Annual Meeting being concluded at 7:00 pm with no additional members driving up at the last minute called the meeting adjourned.

The total attendance was 307 members.



The mural in Faulkton is a prominent feature in the town. Aerial photography by Billy Gibson.

# EYE-POPPING APPEAL

## Faulkton Mural Attracts Attention from Far and Near

**Billy Gibson**

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

The story of how the small town of Faulkton became an attraction for art aficionados far and near actually begins on another continent many years ago.

Today, Faulkton is home to an imposing 110-foot mural displayed on three sides of an Agtegra grain elevator, the town's most prominent structure. Visible from long distances on Hwy. 212, the mural depicts a boy and girl and several wide-brimmed hats blowing between them in the prairie wind. While the meaning of the mural is open to as many interpretations as there are viewers, the intriguing story of how the artwork came into existence is a "10 beer tale," according to Dave Hedt, the community leader who initiated the project.

A native of Australia, the mate known among the locals as "Aussie Dave" was nursing a "frothy" in a bar in Melbourne when he encountered a chap from Faulkton who happened to be in Melbourne on business. He and Craig Mutsch struck up a conversation during that chance encounter in 1998 and kept in regular contact until 2013 when Hedt decided to relocate to South Dakota on a permanent basis.

Hedt went to work for Mutsch in the beginning before eventually setting down roots in Faulkton. He later married a gal from Harrold, became a regular at Lakeside Golf Club, built a retail strip center along the highway across from the Agtegra elevator and established several businesses in the quiet town.

The idea of creating the mural is actually credited to Hedt's father, who was visiting his son one day in 2015: "He was here and we were driving into town and he saw the grain elevator. He said, 'Hey, why don't you call Guido about painting a mural on that.' Right away I thought it was a great idea," Aussie Dave recalled.

In this case, Guido is the internationally renowned photographer and visual artist Guido Van Helten, who had painted a highly acclaimed mural on the side of a set of grain silos in Brim, Australia, not far from Hedt's home town of Dimboola.

"That mural had such a positive impact on the community, I knew it would get the same kind of response here and create the



The town known as The Carousel City, is home to several murals seen in public spaces.



## Faulkton Mural Fast Facts

- The mural stands 110 feet high
- The project took seven weeks to complete
- Artist Guido Van Helton has done similar projects all around the world
- Local residents donated their time and labor to prepare the grain elevator for painting

same kind of excitement, for the town,” Hedt said.

He got in touch with the artist, who didn’t hesitate to take on the project. Van Helten visited Faulkton several times conducting preliminary work before taking his brushes in hand. As he’d done with previous similar projects, Van Helten spent time getting involved in community events and getting to know the residents of The Carousel City. He was hosted by a local family and tried to capture the ambiance of the town to inspire the visual and thematic elements of his work.

He received tremendous support from the community as folks chipped in to help the project financially and also contributed some “sweat equity” by scraping, cleaning and pressure-washing the elevator’s concrete surface in preparation for Van Helten’s artistic touch.

Grant funding was received from the South Dakota Arts Council and other non-profit groups, while the balance of the funds were raised privately through sponsorships and contributions from local businesses. Hedt is quick to point out no taxpayer money was used. For its part, Agtegra was quickly sold on the idea as plans were to eventually take the elevator out of service and move the operation to another site east of town.

As for what would ultimately appear on the side of the elevator, the residents were lending their support without knowing how the project would actually turn out. They figured they could always paint over it if they felt the mural’s theme wasn’t congruent with the town’s self-image.



Artist Guido Van Helton spent several weeks in Faulkton getting to know the local residents and getting a sense of the town’s spirit before he started painting.

“Guido kind of kept that a secret,” Hedt said. “He wanted it to be a surprise, but knew from the other things he’d done that it would be spectacular and something that we would all be proud of. He always paints what he feels is reflective of the town and the people.”

After the surface was prepared, it took several weeks for Van Helten to complete the painting while working suspended beside the large concrete canvas. The painting was unveiled on Sept. 1, 2018. Hedt said the result of the project has brought more positive results than anyone in the town could have anticipated.

“In terms of the financial impact, it’s just unbelievable the traffic we get through the town,” he said. “We had a woman from Washington state fly all the way here just to see it.”

Dawn Melius is owner of a local insurance agency and has been involved in the project since the beginning. She said the mural has brought a unique and welcomed vibrancy to the community.

“It’s such a great work of art, and people can interpret it however they want. That’s part of the fun of it and the attraction of it. It’s such an amazing project and it has brought a lot of interest to the town. Of course, once people are drawn here by the mural and they stop and spend some time around town, they like what they see and they have a real positive experience.”

Find an aerial video of the mural by visiting the Cooperative Connections Plus YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/n2gEDAltHMk>. Find out more about Van Helten at [www.guidovanhelten.com](http://www.guidovanhelten.com).

# Mark Your Calendar!

Attend H-D Electric's annual meeting Tuesday, March 23, 2021

H-D Electric Headquarters  
18240 SD HWY 15  
Clear Lake, S.D. 57226

Registration begins at 6:30 p.m.

H-D Electric's annual meeting will begin at 7 p.m.

**Remember to bring the registration card on the back of this newsletter to the annual meeting.**

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Don't keep your refrigerator too cold. The Department of Energy recommends a temperature setting of 35 to 38 degrees for the fresh food compartment and zero degrees for the freezer.

Make sure the refrigerator doors are sealed airtight to maximize efficiency.



# Director Candidate Profiles

As of the Feb. 1 magazine deadline, H-D Electric has received a completed petition for District 7 and 8 for the 2021 director elections. If more petitions are received on or before the Feb. 28 petition deadline, a candidate profile will be posted on the H-D Electric website at [www.h-delectric.coop](http://www.h-delectric.coop).

## District 7

**Bert Rogness** operates a grain and livestock farm east of Astoria with his son, Darin. It is his great grandfather's homesteaded. Bert and his wife, Verna, have four children and nine grandchildren.

Bert has served on the H-D Electric board since 1997 and has been board president since 2002. He has also served on the East River Electric board since 2005. Bert is currently on the South Dakota Value Added Agriculture Development Center board and is on the board of Blom Prairie Lutheran church in Toronto.



**Bert Rogness**

Bert says, "with all the changes happening nationwide in the utility industry, I want to continue to keep H-D Electric Co-op a dependable provider of electricity and work to keep our rates competitive."



**Dale Williams**

## District 8

**Dale Williams** says, "Thank you for letting me serve on the H-D Electric board. I hope I can count on your vote to continue serving. As a board member one of our proudest moments was the completion of the headquarters building. It took years of careful planning. The site was purchase years in advanced. Then when conditions were right, low interest and favorable construction costs, we were able to act quickly because the planning was mostly done already.

My grandpa bought the farm we live on in 1903. My dad took it over in 1941 and I started in 1976. Our two sons are now starting to take it over. I will have more free time to serve on the H-D Electric board if I get your vote.

Mary Ann and I have three children - two sons and one daughter - and nine grandchildren. We will keep working to keep your electric rates stable. Safety for your employees is our number one goal. We are committed to helping communities whenever we can."

## H-D Monthly Poster Contest Winner

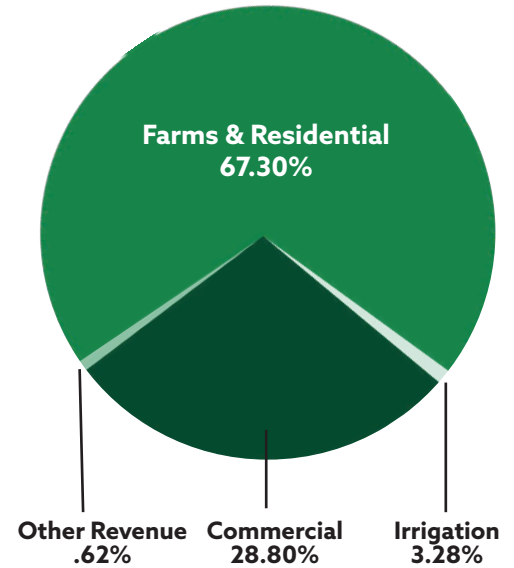
Adalin Homola, daughter of Joe and Sonja Homola, from Lake Norden, S.D., won the wooden box full of magnets, stickers and a coloring set for being the poster contest winner in November.

Congratulation, Adalin!



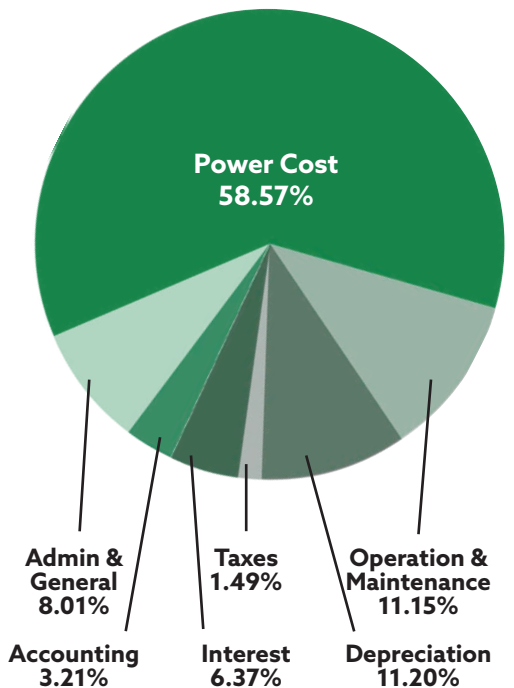
Operating Summary	2020	2019
<b>Income</b>		
Farms and Residential	\$7,725,688	\$8,001,313
Commercial	\$3,306,258	\$3,282,357
Irrigation	\$376,476	\$47,864
Other Operating Revenue	\$70,821	\$60,290
<b>REVENUE FROM ELECTRIC SALES</b>	\$11,479,243	\$11,391,824
Margin Stabilization	(318,269)	\$40,224
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$11,160,974	\$11,432,048
<b>Expense</b>		
Cost of Purchased Power	\$6,499,712	\$6,635,844
Operation of Lines	\$753,688	\$825,586
Maintenance of Lines	\$484,058	\$445,293
Consumers Accounting & Collecting	\$197,060	\$185,990
Customer Service Expense	\$155,239	\$165,094
Sales Expense	\$3,461	\$4,673
Other Administrative & General Expense	\$889,450	\$938,659
Depreciation	\$1,242,995	\$1,213,550
Taxes	\$165,134	\$169,065
Interest Expense	\$700,344	\$698,963
Other Misc. Expense	\$6,965	\$6,759
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	\$11,098,106	\$11,289,476
Operating Margins for the Year	\$62,868	\$142,572
Non-Operating Margins for the Year	\$225,526	\$206,915
G & T Capital Credits & Other	\$546,164	\$497,153
<b>TOTAL MARGINS FOR THE YEAR</b>	\$834,558	\$846,640

## 2020 Revenue Dollar



Balance Sheet	12/31/2020	12/31/2019
<b>Assets</b>		
Lines, Office Bldg, & Operating Equipment	\$42,327,541	\$41,288,499
Construction Work In Progress	\$731,955	\$131,706
Less: Reserve for Depreciation	(\$16,059,323)	(\$15,150,281)
<b>TOTAL ELECTRIC PLANT LESS DEPR</b>	\$27,000,173	\$26,269,924
Cash on Hand	\$21,581	\$16,839
Patronage Capital & Investments in Related Organizations	\$7,434,362	\$7,145,276
Working Capital, Member Loans & Investments in Other Organizations	\$2,657,811	\$2,772,848
<b>TOTAL CASH AND INVESTMENTS</b>	\$10,113,754	\$9,934,963
Receivables from Electric Consumers	\$1,078,992	\$1,178,460
Interest & Others	\$65,768	\$627,111
<b>TOTAL RECEIVABLES</b>	\$1,144,760	\$1,805,571
Material & Supplies	\$1,001,016	\$710,534
Prepaid Insurance & Dues	\$39,015	\$41,405
Deferred Debits	\$705,286	\$595,795
<b>TOTAL MATERIAL &amp; OTHER ASSETS</b>	\$1,745,317	\$1,347,734
<b>TOTAL OF WHAT WE OWN</b>	\$40,004,004	\$39,358,192
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Amount borrowed from RUS and CFC	\$43,780,985	\$42,780,985
We paid back on Principal	(\$18,537,851)	(\$17,562,994)
Advance Payment to RUS	(\$1,164,373)	(\$1,110,686)
<b>TOTAL LONG TERM DEBT</b>	\$24,078,761	\$24,107,305
We Owe East River (Consumer Loans)	\$75,397	\$78,020
We Owe Consumers (Deposits)	\$38,649	\$30,299
Deferred Credits	\$77,827	\$94,757
Regulatory Liabilities	\$1,948,133	\$1,629,864
Accounts Payable & Other Liabilities	\$1,157,804	\$1,158,811
<b>TOTAL OTHER LIABILITIES</b>	\$3,297,810	\$2,991,751
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT WE OWE</b>	\$27,376,571	\$27,099,056
Patronage Capital & Other Equity	\$12,627,433	\$12,259,136
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	\$40,004,004	\$39,358,192

## 2020 Expense Dollar



2020 Financial Statements have not been audited.



Troy Ziebart, line foreman at Douglas Electric in Armour, loads up his vehicle before hitting the road to perform maintenance work on the co-op's system. Photo by Billy Gibson.

## On the Road Again

### Cooperative crews log millions of safe miles each year

#### Billy Gibson

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

Some people follow their instincts to run away from emergency situations, others are obligated to steer towards them.

South Dakota's electric cooperative linemen often find themselves headed toward the site of potentially hazardous predicaments, whether it's simply answering an emergency outage call or engaging in rebuilding many miles of poles and lines in the most austere conditions in the aftermath of a major storm.

In any event, the first task for linemen is to arrive at the scene and make the return trip to co-op headquarters with themselves and their vehicles all in one piece. Many cooperative consumers are unaware of the fact that co-op linemen in South Dakota collectively log more than 8 million miles on the road each year taking care of maintenance projects, installing equipment, performing public service work, answering outage calls or other daily duties.

That figure includes those instances when linemen are called upon to drive long

distances across state lines to assist other fellow cooperatives restore power after a natural disaster, which raises the potential risk for accidents.

Compared to the amount of time and number of miles they travel on a routine basis, cooperative linemen have an impressive track record of operating their vehicles without incident and without harm to either themselves or the motoring public.

According to Mark Patterson, manager of loss control services at the South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) in Pierre, safe operating practices do much more than just save lives and property; they also keep insurance premiums down and help control the cost of fleet maintenance.

"Safety is such an important aspect of what we do as electric cooperatives, and it takes on many dimensions," Patterson said. "We often think of safety as adopting prudent practices when it comes to working in close proximity to different equipment such as power lines, transformers and substations. But it also includes other aspects such as safety in the workplace,

emergency preparedness, handling hazardous materials and knowing how important it is to be safe out on the road every time we leave the back shop and pull out of the gate."

As with many aspects of their operations, South Dakota's electric cooperatives are using the power of computer software and advanced technology to promote safety on the road. Many co-ops use software programs such as NexTraq, which processes and provides a wealth of information to help maintenance managers keep records on vehicle tracking and telemetry, fuel use and efficiency, service scheduling, driver performance, job completion and more.

These systems deliver real-time data not only on vehicle speed, heading, location, etc., but they also indicate where each vehicle is positioned at any given moment within the service territory so that supervisors can more effectively and efficiently coordinate movements of various crews throughout the system and throughout the work day.

"Linemen from the old days would be amazed at the advanced technology we



Cooperative linemen log thousands of hours on the road but sometimes find themselves having to take their vehicles off the paved surfaces. *Aerial photography by Billy Gibson.*

now have at our disposal,” Patterson said. “And it’s not just things like hydraulics and buckets and all the equipment we use today, but also the computer-based tools we have to help us do our jobs better. It all adds up to making the best use of the members’ resources and ultimately making sure the electricity we deliver is as affordable as possible. Members can count on the fact that cooperatives are trusted stewards of their resources and we’re doing everything we can to keep costs low.”

One of those mechanics who remembers the “old days” is Jody Pateneau, who has kept watch over the vehicle fleet at Moreau-Grand Electric for the past 20 years. Pateneau, who notes that linemen are required to carry a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) and that he has one himself, said fleet maintenance was more of an art in the past.

“We kept records as well as we could, but we would just kind of know when parts or brakes or oil needed to be changed

and what needed to be done,” he said. “But with the new technology, we know what needs to be taken care of a long time before the guys driving the vehicle know. Our job is to make sure there are no break-downs when our guys get out there and that no one is in danger, and the computer helps us accomplish that goal.”

Patterson pointed out that the public also plays a role in making sure cooperative linemen and their vehicles stay accident-free. He said every year linemen and other utility workers across the country are severely injured or killed either in their vehicles or in their work sites.

“We should all be more aware of emergency workers who perform their jobs along roadsides or other places where traffic is present,” Patterson said. “We always remind the public to ‘slow down and move over’ when they see a work area or utility vehicle nearby. It’s not only good, sound advice, but it’s also the law in the state of South Dakota.”



Jody Pateneau has been a mechanic at Moreau-Grand Electric for 20 years and considers his job an important part of not only keeping linemen safe on the road but also containing costs for the cooperative. *Photo by Roger Lawien.*

## Visit Co-op Connections Plus

Take a moment to visit our new online companion to *Cooperative Connections*. Co-op Connections Plus is a YouTube channel that features a more in-depth treatment of stories appearing in this publication as well as other subjects of interest to rural South Dakotans.

Search for “Co-op Connections Plus” and you’ll find videos on human trafficking, support programs for veterans, grain bin safety, the Co-ops Vote campaign and more. Be sure to “like” and “subscribe.”





Quin and Tom Brunner (foreground, center) are strong supporters of home schooling. They home schooled each of their seven children. Brunner is a former state legislator who served as an advocate for alternative education options for South Dakota families.

## Home Schooling Learning from Home Provides Flexibility for Families

**Billy Gibson**

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

If home schooling were a common stock and you jumped into the market 10 years ago, you'd be on Easy Street right now.

Statistics show that since 2010, the number of families home schooling their children in South Dakota has increased 125 percent. And with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the numbers continue to climb steadily. According to state records, there were 5,109 home schoolers in 2019. Last year that number increased 27 percent to 6,698.

Once seen as somewhat of a fringe movement, home schooling is getting a fresh look from families all across the country.

And that's just fine with Tom Brunner, a board member at Butte Electric Cooperative in Newell and a member of the state Legislature for 14 years. Brunner and his wife, Quin, have taught each of their seven children from home. Today those children are grown up and pursuing a variety of career tracks, an occupation list that includes earth science, welding, legal counseling, music instruction and more.

While Brunner no longer serves in the statehouse, he recalls being a vocal advocate for alternative education options for South Dakota families.

"I was grateful to receive a lot of cooperation from my fellow lawmakers and people at the Department of Education because I think everyone understood that the department is responsible for overseeing the education of all of the students in our state, not just those attending public schools," he said.

Looking back on his legislative career, Brunner said he is proud of the work he did to make sure parents and families had choices, but that those families also needed to be held accountable for adhering to certain guidelines. For example, parents must comply with state law by submitting a Notification for Public School Exemption Certificate to the local superintendent each year.

While home school instructors aren't required to attain certification, they cannot instruct more than 22 students and must conduct nationally standardized testing in grades four, eight and 11. Local officials are allowed to monitor those tests while the state is entitled to inspect the records of alternative education programs if there is probable cause of non-compliance.

It's also the local district's responsibility to track the student's progress using the Student Information Management System (Infinite Campus System) to make sure certain educational

# How to Begin Home Schooling in South Dakota

**To home school in South Dakota, parents must complete the following steps:**

- Every year, complete and file a notification for Public School Exemption.
- Return the completed exemption form to the public school district office where you reside.
- Choose the best home school curriculum that includes required subjects of language arts and math.
- Participate in standardized tests in grades 4, 8 and 11.
- Keep good records.
- Have fun learning together!



standards are being met and students aren't "slipping through the cracks."

"I've always felt families have the right to do what's best for the education of their children, but as a state we also have a duty to make sure our children are being taught what they need to know to be successful in life," Brunner said. "There's a fear that kids who aren't in public schools might be used as laborers or just sitting around the house and not being supervised. I've never seen a case where that fear is a reality."

The good news for home school parents and those searching for options is that in addition to the state DOE, there are many resources available. South Dakota is home to roughly 15 associations, alliances, cooperatives and other groups created to help families achieve their educational goals.

There is also the Home School Legal Defense Association based in Purcellville, Va., a non-profit organization whose mission is to "defend and advance the constitutional right of parents to direct

the upbringing and education of their children and to protect family freedoms."

Like many aspects of society, home schooling was given a second blush after the pandemic struck. Community schools were among the first public gathering places to be shut down once the virus began spreading across the country. When it became clear the virus wouldn't be disappearing soon, parents became accustomed to juggling the responsibilities of work while dealing with their children receiving instruction remotely.

While some parents struggled with the new reality, others gave consideration to adopting the home school platform on a permanent basis. Observers with the U.S. DOE predict the increased interest in home schooling will be sustained long after the pandemic has passed. The National Federation of Children conducted a poll that indicated 40 percent of U.S. families are more likely to home school or enroll their children in a virtual school after the pandemic.

Before the pandemic, the reason most

parents gave for choosing home schooling for their children was a "concern about the school environment, such as safety, drugs, or negative peer pressure." Other top reasons were a desire to provide more moral and religious instruction, a dissatisfaction with public school instruction and the ability to take a "non-traditional" approach to education.

Brunner said he has explored and discussed many different sides of the issue and is fully aware that when it comes to matters of public policy, public funding and personal choice, people can have strong feelings.

"In our state, we place a high value on our rights and freedoms," he said. "I've been in many meetings with those who have very strong opinions, but we've always had very civil discussions. And while our opinions might differ, there's always been a clear understanding that we all want the same outcome: making sure all of our children get the education and preparation they need to live a fulfilling life and have an opportunity to raise a family of their own."

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

**February 18-25**

Twelfth Annual Black Hills Film Festival, Virtual  
605-574-9454

**February 20**

Family Gras, Washington Pavilion, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-367-6000

**February 20-27**

SD State High School Wrestling Tournament, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD

**February 25**

Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood Live: Neighbor Day, Washington Pavilion, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-367-6000

**February 27**

Nemo 500 Outhouse Races Nemo Guest Ranch, Nemo, SD  
605-578-2708

**March 5-6**

SD High School State Debate & IE Tournament, Central High School, Aberdeen, SD

**March 5-7**

BH Rapid's President's Cup 2021, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Rushmore Hall, Rapid City, SD 605-394-4115

**March 11-14**

Team 8-Ball Tournament, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Rushmore Hall, Rapid City, SD 605-394-4115

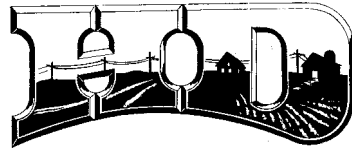
**March 12-13**

St. Patrick's Day Weekend, Main Street, Deadwood, SD  
605-578-1976



St. Patrick's Day Weekend, Mar. 12-13, 2021

Please bring this page with you



Electric Cooperative, Inc.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**Attend H-D Electric's Annual Meeting**

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

6:30 p.m.  
7 p.m.

Registration  
Meeting Begins

**Meeting Location:  
H-D Headquarters**

18240 SD HWY 15  
Clear Lake, SD 57226

**Voter Registration Form**

To be used only by:  
Churches, Halls, Public Entities  
Corporations or Partnerships.  
Please present this form to receive a ballot.

**REGISTRATION CARD**

(Name of Organization)

**delegate and appoints:**

(Name of Voting Delegate)

as the person authorized to vote on behalf  
of the above entity at the 2020 annual  
meeting of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc.

(Signature of Member)

(Signature of Officer)

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.