

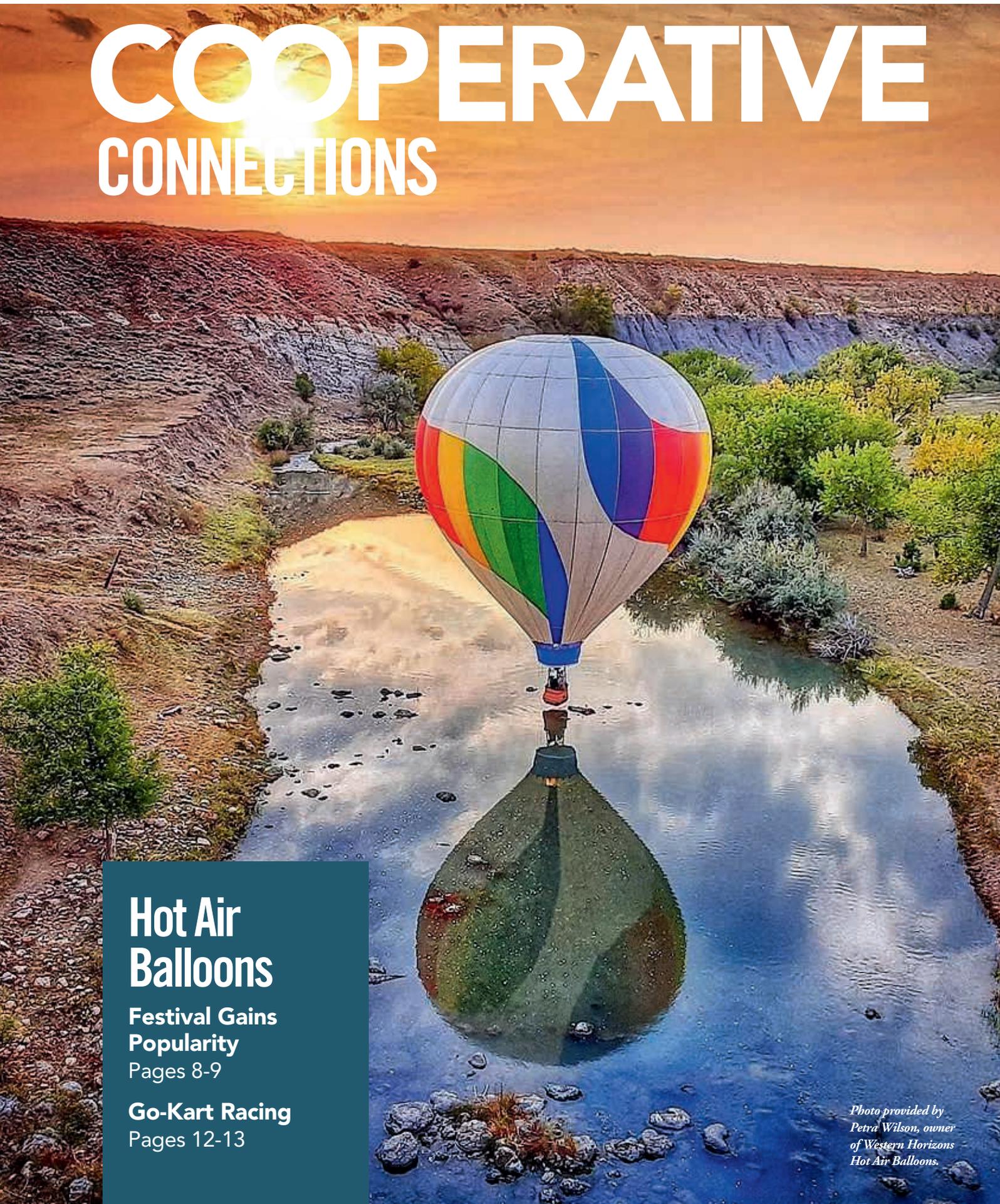
# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

## Hot Air Balloons

**Festival Gains  
Popularity**  
Pages 8-9

**Go-Kart Racing**  
Pages 12-13

*Photo provided by  
Petra Wilson, owner  
of Western Horizons  
Hot Air Balloons.*



# Your Electric Bill Breakdown



**Matt Hotzler**  
Manager

I was recently asked about what impacts electricity prices. We talked about how the daily cost of living seems to have increased across the board.

Just as inflation has impacted everything from the price of gasoline to the price of eggs, costs for the fuels required to produce electricity have also risen. This is a timely topic, so I wanted to help explain some of the factors that impact electricity prices (and energy bills) in this month's H-D Electric Cooperative Connections issue.

While there is no short answer, a few key elements impact electricity prices and rates. H-D Electric Cooperative can manage some of these factors; some of them you can impact, and others are beyond our control. So, let me break it down.

There are three primary parts to your monthly electric bill: a monthly charge, an energy charge (kWh), and in some cases, a demand charge (kW). Let's unpack one piece at a time to understand your total energy costs and what impacts your bill.

The first is a fixed monthly charge, which covers some of the costs of providing electricity to your home. This includes equipment, materials, labor, and operating costs necessary to serve each meter in H-D Electric Cooperative's service territory, regardless of the energy used. We must maintain the local system, including power lines, transformers, and other necessary equipment, to ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve. Like many other businesses, we've experienced supply chain issues and steep cost increases for some essential equipment. For example, the cost for a typically used distribution transformer (which looks like a green box) went from around \$1400 in 2020 to \$2400 this year, and lead times to receive this essential equipment are up to about one year. This example is for our smallest-sized transformers; the price hikes are even more shocking for larger transformers. Because we are a not-for-profit cooperative, any money spent comes from our members.

Another part of your monthly bill is the energy (kWh) charge, which covers how much energy you consume. You've likely noticed the amount of energy you use can vary monthly and is typically impacted by temperatures. When temperatures

soar or dip, your cooling and heating equipment run longer, which increases your home energy use. Regardless, energy consumption is an area that you have some control over, and you can lower your monthly bill by actively reducing energy use. Your thermostat is a great place to start; the temperature you have it set at determines how much your heating and cooling needs to run.

The last component of your bill may be the demand or kW, currently, only a few rates have a demand component. Like energy, demand fluctuates each month and can measure how much electrical usage occurs at a given time. I think of demand as a roadway in a big city. If you have two lanes on a freeway and most of the traffic moves freely but during rush hour times while people are commuting to and from work, that two-lane road can become congested and backup, and at some point, may require to increase that freeway from two to three lanes to stop congestion. Similarly, if everything in your home comes on at once, such as your stove, the washer and dryer, the water heater, and increasingly an electric vehicle charger, this may require us to upgrade our equipment to serve, and that has a cost as we can see upgrading transformer sizes is even more costly today than it was just three years ago. H-D Electric's power bill from East River includes a demand component. The water heater load control program is critical to keep our power costs down; this control keeps our demand down and is virtually unnoticed by the members. That savings is ultimately passed on to the members because we pay less for on our power bill.

I hope this information sheds light on some factors that impact electricity prices. While we can't control the weather, we know that stable prices are important, and while we haven't seen an increase in our rate since 2018 we know that it may be necessary to raise rates in some future year. Hopefully, rate increases can be a few years away but be assured we work hard to keep electricity prices down.

H-D Electric Cooperative is here to help you, too. Contact us if you have questions about your energy bill or for advice on saving energy at home.

**COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS**  
**H-D ELECTRIC**

(USPS No. 018-905)

**General Manager:** Matt Hotzler  
**Headquarters Employees:**  
 Annie Aberle – Finance and Administration Manager  
 Michelle Prins – Billing Clerk  
 Heidi Brewer-Grimlie – Accounting Clerk  
 Jami Bolden – Receptionist/Cashier  
 Roger Cutshaw – Engineer  
 Darren Matthies – Building Property Worker  
**Operations:**  
 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 – Lead Equipment Operator/  
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 Joseph Jordan Jr. – Apprentice Lineworker  
 Eric Page – Apprentice Lineworker  
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H-D ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 1007, 18240 SD Hwy 15, Clear Lake, SD 57226-1007 for its members. Families subscribe to H-D Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. H-D Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better rural living. H-D Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Clear Lake, S.D., and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: H-D Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 1007, Clear Lake, SD 57226-1007; telephone (605) 874-2171; toll-free 1-800-358-7233; fax (605) 874-8173; e-mail info@h-delectric.coop

Design assistance by SDREA.



## Pole Testing

Annually, typically in July or August, we have an outside contractor come to test power poles on our system. They check to make sure the poles are solid inside and out. It's that time again, so if you see a group digging around our poles, you can call the office to verify they are in the area or ask them.

We provide them a documentation letter from us explaining what they are doing to show anyone with questions. They will test around 750 poles this year throughout the season. In addition, H-D Electric personnel test meter poles throughout the year to verify poles are structurally sound.

## Capital Credits



### What are capital credits?

Capital credits are one of the many benefits of cooperative membership and represents each member's share of H-D Electric's margins and ownership. Since H-D Electric is a not-for-profit cooperative, it does not earn profits in the sense that other businesses do.

Instead, any margins, or revenue remaining after all the expenses have been paid, are allocated to the members in proportion to their electricity purchases. These margins represent an interest-free loan of operating capital by the membership to the cooperative. From these margins the cooperative builds equity with the intention of repaying the member's investment, which is done through the retirement of capital credits.

## Operating Statistics:

	May 2022	May 2023
Meters Served.....	3,747	3,786
Amount Collected.....	\$897,413	\$911,843
Avg. Bill .....	\$239.50	\$240.85
Avg. kWh-Hour .....	2,068	2,046
Avg. kWh-Hours Purchased ...	8,245,061	8,212,770
Kilowatt-Hours Sold.....	7,748,371	7,745,243

# Working Out in the Heat

Exercising outdoors is a great way to enjoy the sunshine and warmer weather of summer. But you'll need to take some extra precautions to stay safe. Here are some do's and don'ts for working out when temperatures climb.

### **DO: Stay hydrated**

Drink plenty of water before, during and after your workout to prevent dehydration and help regulate body temperature. Nicole Thompson of the American Council on Exercise recommends slowly drinking water or sports drinks about four hours before exercising. Aim for 1 ounce for every 11 pounds of body weight – so 10 ounces for a 110-pound person or 20 ounces for a 220-pound person.

Weigh yourself before and after working out to determine how much fluid you need to replace. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommends drinking 2-3 cups of water for every pound lost.

### **DON'T: Drink products containing alcohol**

Alcohol is a diuretic, so it contributes to dehydration.

### **DO: Wear lightweight and breathable clothing**

Choose light-colored and loose-fitting clothes made of moisture-wicking materials. This'll help keep you cool and dry.

### **DON'T: Wear dark colors or heavy fabrics**

Dark-colored clothing can absorb heat and trap it against your body.

### **DO: Wear sunscreen**

The key number to look for on your sunscreen is the sun protection factor. An SPF of 15 filters out about 93% of UVB rays, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, while an SPF of 30 will filter out around 97%. Look for "broad spectrum" on the label to protect against UVA and UVB rays.

Apply sunscreen 15 or 20 minutes before going out (check the instructions on the label). Reapply every two hours – or more frequently if you're sweating a lot. Don't forget about your ears, lips and any bald spots on your scalp – they need protection, too.

### **DON'T: Work out during the hottest times of the day**

The sun is at its strongest between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., so try to schedule workouts for earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon. Remember, you can always work out inside and in an air-conditioned area if needed.

### **DO: Know the signs of heat-related illness**

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Nausea and dizziness
- Headaches
- Feeling weak

A weak or rapid pulse

Cold, clammy skin

If you experience any sign of heat exhaustion, move to a cool place, loosen your clothing, put cool and wet cloths on your body or take a cool bath, and sip water, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says. Get medical help if your symptoms don't go away after an hour, if your symptoms worsen or if you're throwing up.

Symptoms of heatstroke include:

A body temperature of 103° F or higher

Hot, dry, bright red or damp skin

Labored breathing

A fast, strong pulse

Headache, dizziness, nausea or confusion

Loss of consciousness

Heatstroke is an emergency. If you suspect it, call 911 immediately.

### **DON'T: Overdo it**

Adjust your workout intensity to account for the heat and listen to your body's cues. Shorter workouts are good when temperatures rise. Allow your body to get used to the heat. Then you can gradually increase your time outdoors and exercise intensity.



### **Don't pull the cord!**

#### **Gabrielle Clement, Age 10**

Gabrielle Clement advises people it's not safe to pull the cord when disconnecting appliances from an outlet. Gabrielle is the daughter of Dustin and Michelle Clement from Box Elder, S.D., members of West River Electric Association.

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.

# Savory Summer SALADS

## GRAPE SALAD

Ingredients:

- 2 lbs. red seedless grapes
- 2 lbs. green seedless grapes
- 1-8 oz. cream cheese (softened)
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup chopped pecans

### METHOD

Wash and dry grapes. Mix cream cheese and sour cream. Add sugar and vanilla. Mix well. Fold in grapes. Place in 9x13 pan. Sprinkle with brown sugar and pecans.

**Angie Ruiters**  
Sioux Falls, S.D.

## CHICKEN SALAD

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup plain lowfat yogurt
- 2 tbsp. mayonnaise
- 1 tsp. parsley flakes
- 1/2 tsp. seasoned salt
- 1/4 tsp. pure ground black pepper
- 1/2 rotisserie chicken, cut into bite-size chunks (about 2 cups)
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced celery
- 1/4 cup chopped red onion

### METHOD

Mix yogurt, mayonnaise, parsley, seasoned salt and pepper in large bowl. Add chicken, celery and onion; toss to coat well. Cover. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes or until ready to serve. Serve in sandwiches or on salad greens.

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

## CORN CUCUMBER SALAD

Ingredients:

- 2 cans whole kernel corn (drained)
- 1 cup diced, unpeeled and seeded cucumbers
- 1/4 cup chopped red onion
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsp. lime juice
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1/2 tsp. garlic salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground cumin

### METHOD

Mix corn, cucumber and onion in large bowl. Set aside. Mix remaining ingredients in small bowl until well blended. Add to corn mixture; toss lightly to coat. Cover. Refrigerate 2 hours or until ready to serve.

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

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 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

# Teach Your Children Well

**Q:** I'm making an effort to reduce my energy use, and I want my kids to start energy-saving habits as well. How can I encourage them to use less electricity at home?

**A:** When I was a kid, I dreamed of one day having a home where I could pay my own electric bill. Said no one ever. While it's not the most fun way to spend money, people typically want to live in a home with electricity. Educating kids on energy use and costs can help engage them in your family's goal to use less electricity. They can be electric conservation champions if you ask them to help. Here are some ways you can teach kids to use less electricity.



**Miranda Boutelle**  
Efficiency Services  
Group

Show them how to read the electric bill. Focus on what you can control: kilowatt-hour use. If they are old enough, teach them how to do the math. You can calculate kWh use by multiplying wattage by hours used and dividing by 1,000. Multiply this by the kWh rate found on your electric bill to estimate how much you spend on power for each household appliance.

For example, if you have a space heater that uses 1,500 watts and is on for four hours a day for a month, it uses 180 kWh. With an average kWh rate of 13.7 cents in the United States, the space heater costs about \$25 a month to operate. That same space heater costs about \$74 a month if it is on for 12 hours per day. Your kWh rate may be lower or higher depending on where you live.

For household appliance wattage, look for the amount stamped on the bottom, back or nameplate. If the nameplate does not include wattage, figure it out by multiplying the voltage by the amperage.

To teach children the impact of saving

energy, have them help you conserve with the household's biggest energy-consuming appliances: heating and cooling. Teach kids to dress appropriately for the seasons, even when they are indoors, which allows you to set the thermostat to balance comfort and savings.

You can also leave the house during the hottest times of the day to go for a swim or play outside. Before you go, nudge up the thermostat a few degrees to avoid wasted energy cooling an empty house. Turn off fans when you leave a room.

The second-highest use of electricity is typically the electric water heater. Use a shower timer so bigger kids can monitor how long they are in the shower. Teach them to wash their clothes with cold water. If you have a gas water heater, look at the gas bill to find opportunities to save.

Other ways to save include turning off the lights when you leave the room. The more we switch to LED lighting, the less savings associated. Yet even little changes can add up throughout the year. If your child needs a nightlight to sleep with, make sure it's an LED bulb.

Powering down gaming stations and computers is another way to save. In the kitchen, keep the refrigerator door shut. Teach kids to take a quick peek and shut the door while they think about their snack options.

After teaching your kids about electric bills and showing them how to save electricity, make a game out of your family's energy conservation efforts. Challenge the family to use less energy than last month or the same month last year. Use the savings to reward them with a treat or let the winner pick the game night activity or film for family movie night.

You can also teach children where the electricity for their home comes from. Check out your electric co-op's website or give them a call to find out what energy sources power your home.

# EMPOWERING ENTREPRENEURS

## Four Bands Community Fund fosters prosperity

**Frank Turner**

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Empowering Native American communities and fostering economic growth, Four Bands Community Funds is a nonprofit working to create opportunities on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation and beyond. With service footprint spanning all communities on Cheyenne River from Dupree, Eagle Butte, Timber Lake, and Isabel, as well as serving entrepreneurs from Rapid City to Sioux Falls, the fund strives to assist others in achieving their own financial goals. Whether it's for an aspiring small business entrepreneur seeking a successful launch or an individual looking to improve their own financial situations, Four Bands Community Fund has a range of programs in place to provide support.

At the forefront of the nonprofit is Lakota Vogel, who serves as the executive director of Four Bands Community Fund. Born and raised on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, Vogel joined the fund in 2011 and later assumed the role of executive director in 2015, further defining and advancing the nonprofit's mission within her hometown community.

The roots of the nonprofit reach back to 1999 when a forward-thinking group of representatives from the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and local community members came together to empower their local artist community. They established a new nonprofit, offering accessible, small-dollar loans to local artists residing on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation. The success of the nonprofit laid the groundwork for new and exciting avenues of support.

"We are an institution that believes in educating people and meeting them where they are at," said Vogel. "A lot of our initial efforts focused on engaging in conversations with the community about money,



Four Bands Community Fund's team of highly qualified staff.

including the youth."

Over time, the scope of the nonprofit's finance campaign expanded to encompass nearly every aspect of personal and business finance, including business lending, financial empowerment, youth entrepreneurship, small business development. Recognizing a need for support beyond the boundaries of the reservation, the Four Bands Community Fund extended the availability of its small business resources beyond the limits of the reservations in 2013, allowing all tribal member entrepreneurs across the entire state of South Dakota to access their small business loans.

Every incremental step toward progress has amounted to a significant impact for members the Cheyenne River Reservation community. To date, the nonprofit has distributed 611 business development loans, amounting to nearly \$21.3 million with default rates under 3%. Among the success stories that have blossomed from the community fund is Kelsie Kay Haskell, a business owner in Eagle Butte.

Entrepreneurial in nature, Haskell approached the community fund with a few business ideas. Noticing the absence of a coffee shop in Eagle Butte, Haskell set out to bring that caffeinated amenity to her community in 2019. That's when the community fund offered her support

through their new business incubator program. The business, Kelsie Kay's Coffee Shop, quickly grew.

"In the incubator, she got a small business loan for some equipment, like an espresso machine," said Vogel. "She did so well. During the pandemic, she bought a building in downtown Eagle Butte. She used some of our financing to renovate the building into a coffeeshop."

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, Haskell's business quickly became one of the earliest success stories from the fund's new program. Today, her business employs eight individuals, including members of youth in the Eagle Butte community. Vogel said Haskell's success has the potential to "change the face of rural America." According to Vogel, Haskell's success properly exemplifies the small yet thriving impact of successful entrepreneurship in rural communities.

"Entrepreneurship is not something that's talked about enough," said Vogel. "Entrepreneurship doesn't have to be large-scale, like wanting to become someone like Mark Zuckerberg, which I think oftentimes are the people that are held up as role models in the business world. In small communities, that's not what entrepreneurship looks like. Success looks like the Kelsie Kay Haskell of the world."



## TAKING TO THE SKY

Balloons light up the night during the night glow event of the festival.

### Fall River Hot Air Balloon Festival Gains Popularity

**Jocelyn Johnson**

[jocelyn.johnson@sdrea.coop](mailto:jocelyn.johnson@sdrea.coop)

It's a picturesque and dramatic spectacle that's awed most people for several hundred years. Yet, spectators and pilots alike have not tired of the image. Hot air balloons have that quality of enchantment. And what better way to be enchanted than to see dozens of these balloons floating up into the sunrise of a South Dakota sky?

The annual Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce Fall River Hot Air Balloon Festival is attracting nearly 30 balloons and thousands of spectators on Aug. 25-27, 2023. The event is taking place at the airport outside of Hot Springs, S.D., where it will celebrate its 8th year of growing popularity. Festival sightseers can pack all-day-fun into their festivities by visiting the vendors, obstacle courses,

bouncy houses, and performances in Hot Springs by Magician Jared Furnau and the Wild Blue Band.

Petra Wilson, a local commercial pilot, founded the festival in 2016 before opening her own flying business – Western Horizons Hot Air Balloons.

“The way I got introduced to ballooning is a tale of serendipity,” said Wilson. “Almost 20 years ago, my husband and I attended a hot air balloon festival in Peoria, Ill., where we are asked to become crew members for a weekend. On the last flight of the weekend, he asked us if we wanted to go for a ride. The ride was absolutely stunning and from that point on we were hooked.”

Wilson became a private pilot in 2014 and a commercial pilot in 2017. In 2015, Wilson and her husband moved to Hot Springs, where she discovered she was the

only hot air balloon pilot flying in the area.

I introduced many different people to ballooning by inviting them out to watch and even crew,” Wilson said. “Some of those people became my students and eventually became hot air balloon pilots in the Hot Springs area.”

When asked how she started the festival, Wilson replied, “I decided this area was such a beautiful place to fly that I wanted to share it with all my ballooning friends and their friends, as well as locals who might appreciate the beauty of the balloons in the sky, so what better way to do this than having a balloon festival.”

The festival started with the partnership between Wilson and Olivia Mears, Executive Director for the Chamber of Commerce in Hot Springs.

Mears said, “Folks from South Dakota, California, Nebraska, Colorado, and more attend this festival. We attract private pilots who fly for their own enjoyment and commercial pilots who are licensed to carry passengers.”

Tamie Shrum, current balloon-meister for Fall River Hot Air Balloon Festival, is a commercial pilot overseeing the safety and regulation of the participating balloons. She travels the world to fly, including six countries and 37 states. Shrum owns three of her own balloons and earns her living flying passengers and training students how to fly.

“I like to do long jump flying, which is long distance flying,” said Shrum. “My longest distance is 137 miles in a three-hour flight with a top speed of 78 mph.”

Shrum explained that a considerable amount of studying goes into the preparation for a long jump flight. Everything matters – the time of year, time of day, location, and weather patterns.

“We work off of a microscopic level,” Shrum said. “A regular person might say, ‘It’s not that windy today,’ but a balloon pilot might say, ‘It’s too windy to fly today.’”

Describing how balloons fly, Shrum said, “In layman’s terms, hot air rises and cold air sinks. You put heat in the

envelope, making it hotter than ambient temperatures which allows it to lift the massive weight it’s carrying.”

“We use a burner with regular propane,” Shrum continued. “The amount of propane needed changes based upon ambient temperature, altitude of flight, and how much passenger weight is being carried.”

Balloons are simplistic in design but can be challenging to fly.

“You don’t steer a balloon... while airplanes fly against the wind, balloons fly with the wind, which can be unpredictable,” Shrum explained. “Sometimes you land in a park and sometimes you land in main street.”

“I’ve flown over Pikes Peak in Colorado



Commercial Pilot Tamie Shrum looks below on other balloons while flying.

and in Japan along with many other places,” Shrum said. “I’ve been fortunate to sightsee all over the world from 1,000 feet in the air while others are sightseeing from the surface...but South Dakota is one of the most gorgeous places to fly in.”



Commercial Pilot Petra Wilson inspects her balloon.

## Back-to-school preparation includes life-saving driving tips *Teach teens what to do around downed power lines*

It is back-to-school time and that means shopping for school supplies or dorm room décor and the sound of cicadas beckoning us back into our pre-summer routine.

As you prepare the students you know to return to school or a college campus, take a moment to share the story of Mary Gehrig, a teenager who was driving home from a friend's house on a stormy June night. Although some cars had pulled over to wait out the storm, Gehrig was close to home, and she thought she could make it.

Around 25 minutes into her 30-minute drive, Gehrig turned onto the county road that would take her home. Although there was near-zero visibility due to the storm, which turned much more severe than originally forecast, she noticed two white lines in the distance. As she got closer, she realized that those lines were across the road, in her path, and they were anything but small.

"I realized I was not going to (be able to) drive over it," Gehrig recalls. She slammed on the brakes and her car struck the object, which happened to be one of two high-voltage transmission power lines lying in the road. The massive cable stopped Mary's car in its tracks. The car's electrical system was damaged, and she was stuck there alone during the storm.

The next thing Gehrig did was pick up her phone and call her parents. When her dad heard that there was a downed power line involved, he told her to stay in the car and call 9-1-1.

Fire chief Rich Schock, who was on the scene that night, said, "Those are large transmission lines with a lot of volts in them," adding that the outcome could have been fatal had Mary gotten out. "Mary did everything right," he said.

When there is an accident involving downed power lines, a padmount transformer or other related utility equipment, Safe Electricity offers these safety tips:

- Call 9-1-1 and report that a downed line or other electrical equipment is involved.
- Do not get out of the vehicle until electric utility workers say it is safe to exit.
- Warn those involved in the accident to stay put and alert others who might approach to stay back.

Exiting a vehicle or equipment is the last resort and should only be attempted if the car is on fire or giving off smoke. If this is the case, exit the vehicle by crossing your arms and jumping from the vehicle without touching it. Then, hop with both feet together as far as you can.

To watch Mary's story or to learn more, go to [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



## Training from SDREA

On June 28th, 2023 the employees at H-D Electric participated in various trainings that were instructed by Joe Denison from South Dakota Rural Electric Association out of Pierre, which included pole top rescue. We have SDREA come four times a year for various trainings.

Left Picture: Todd Sprang getting his rope secured to help lower the manikin to the ground.

Right Picture: Derek Bille getting his rope ready to rescue the manikin.





## Washington DC Youth Tour

Forty teens representing 20 South Dakota electric cooperatives headed to the Washington, D.C., area June 17-23 for the 2023 Rural Electric Youth Tour.

The program, which can trace its existence back to a 1957 speech by Lyndon B. Johnson where he encouraged electric cooperatives to send youth to the nation's capital so they "can actually see what the flag stands for and represents," encourages teens to engage in their communities and learn about the importance of political involvement. More than 1,300 teens have represented the Rushmore State since South Dakota sent its first group in 1963.

The 2023 group visited many of the historic sites the region has to offer, including a Flag Day stop at Baltimore's Fort McHenry. The fort's bombardment in the War of 1812 was captured in Francis Scott Key's poem, which would eventually become the national anthem.

Old Glory would play a recurring theme in the trip as students could see it at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and also hear an inspirational message centered on the flag from Youth Day keynote speaker Mike Schlappi, a four-time Paralympic medalist in U.S.A. men's wheelchair basketball.

Students also met with the state's congressional delegation and with Youth Tour participants from across the country while touring the many of our nation's historical sites – including the National Archives, Library of Congress, Mount Vernon, U.S. Supreme Court, and many more.

"The Library of Congress really left an impression. I think it's something that will stick with me," said Sawyer Sandal, who represented West River Electric Association on the trip.

"We toured Mount Vernon which is



Youth Tour student Hope Bjerke, representing H-D Electric, visits U.S. Senator John Thune's office.

where George Washington lived, and it is super cool to see all the rooms in the house and see how they lived back then," said Hope Bjerke, who represented H-D Electric. "The holocaust museum was so cool it was interesting to see what all happened during that time. Some things I enjoyed were meeting new people and making friends from all over the country. We saw just about all the memorials and met some veterans from wars like Vietnam."



# RACING FAMILY FUN

Go-kart racers in Aberdeen are placed in divisions by age and skill to keep the races competitive. The track usually hosts races twice a month during the summer months. *Photo by Scott Waltman*

## Go-kart Racing at Aberdeen Track is a Family Affair

**Scott Waltman**

Kevin Horn didn't set out to drive to Aberdeen several times a summer so he could race.

Instead, after seeing races on TV, the Waubay mechanic bought a go-kart for his then-9-year-old daughter. But while she was driving, the kart skidded on some wet grass and she hit the kart trailer. After that, she turned the keys over to Dad.

That was about 11 years ago. Horn took his daughter's number 9 and flipped it to make a 6, and he's been racing ever since.

Like others who race at the Aberdeen Karting Club track at the Brown County Fairgrounds, his story has a tie to family, even if it didn't work out exactly as he thought it would.

Karting, racers and organizers say, is a family affair.

Brody Griffin of Watertown is 10 and started karting three years ago.

He makes the rounds, mostly to the closest tracks in Aberdeen, Brookings and Miller. He races just about every weekend during summer, and the allure is simple. Griffin said he just likes driving.

He was named rookie of the year his first season and finished second in his division his second season in Aberdeen.

But it's not all zipping around the track and trying to pass other drivers. Griffin said he helps work on his kart with his father.

That makes sense to Landon Schott, a 24-year-old racer from Aberdeen who is one of the track's most successful drivers. Now that he's a little older, helps with public relations and social media for the track.

When Schott started racing, he said his father made it clear to him that he would be helping work on the kart and had to keep it clean. Karting can be a big financial investment, and his dad wasn't going to spend heaps of money if his son wasn't going to pitch in and be engaged.

Schott, too, said he appreciates the friendly and family atmosphere of karting.

Sponsorships are critical to both the Aberdeen track and its racers, he said. He wouldn't have been able to travel across the country racing without



Josiah Combellick serves as the event's flagman. *Photo by Scott Waltman*

having sponsors since he started driving in 2006, he said.

The Aberdeen track doesn't have any employees, and the Aberdeen Karting Club is a nonprofit group, so contributions are important, Schott said.

Rick Cartney is the vice president of the Aberdeen Karting Club and has been involved with the track since it was founded in 1996. His first race was in Aberdeen that first year, and now he gets to the track to start prep work around 9 a.m. on race days. Races usually start around 4 p.m. and last into the night.

For Cartney, the payback comes from the smiles on the faces of young racers.

"Mainly, it's for the kids," he said.

They do their best racing when they don't win, but they learn, grow and mature, Cartney said.

The Aberdeen track is between an eighth and a 10th of a mile long and is great for young racers who are just

starting out, he said.

There are races in Aberdeen a couple of times a month during summer, with the schedules of other tracks in the region taken into consideration so drivers can make it to as many races as possible. Generally, there are 30 or 40 drivers in Aberdeen, most of them young people, Cartney said.

Starting at the Aberdeen track has served Schott well. He has advanced to grand national events with both the International Karting Federation and Maxxis Kart Racing, finishing as in the top five, but never quite nabbing a championship. Last December, Schott said, he traveled to Daytona, Fla., and raced with about 70 other drivers, never finishing outside of the top 14.

"I guess maybe I'm just an adrenaline junkie," Schott said.

In 2013, as a junior driver, he won a Maxxis regional championship. The event drew drivers from across the nation and is called the Maxx Daddy, he said.

Schott said that and winning an end-of-season state championship in 2021 on his home track in Aberdeen are, at least to date, two of the highlights of his career.

He also won the state championship in 2015 in Brookings.

The state karting championships used to be in Brookings, but have been in Aberdeen in recent years. They return again this year on Aug. 12.

That event will likely draw about 200 drivers from South Dakota and surrounding states, Cartney said. A heavy bronze trophy in the shape of Mount Rushmore goes to the winner.

It will be yet another chance for the karting community to gather. Both Schott and Horn said they have made friends traveling the karting circuit. It's one of the most enjoyable parts of racing, they said, and Cartney agrees.

"These people are like a second family," he said.



Landon Schott helps prepare a go-kart before the races begin in Aberdeen on Saturday, June 17. Schott is one of the most successful racers from the Aberdeen Karting Klub. *Photo by Scott Waltman*



# HARVESTING HISTORY

The manual labor of past generations of farmers and ranchers is on display each year at the James Valley Threshing Show each September in Andover. *Photo courtesy of James Valley Threshers Association*

## Andover Threshing Show Focuses on History of Agriculture With an Eye to the Future

**Scott Waltman**

Most of the time, the population of Andover hovers somewhere around 65 people.

But during the first weekend of September, there's a parade that usually has four times as many entrants as there are residents.

And when a one-of-a-kind tractor is unveiled, well, the number of visitors swells to a tally approaching 10,000.

The annual James Valley Threshing Show is easily the biggest event in the small Day County town each year. And it's not even close.

In fact, organizers can't think of a bigger threshing show in eastern South Dakota or even across the borders into parts of North Dakota and Minnesota.

Tim Olson is president of the James Valley Threshers Association. He said the show has grown considerably since it moved from a farm just outside of Aberdeen. Most years, he estimates,

about 4,500 people attend.

Olson has been working with the show since it arrived in Andover in 1979. The first event near Aberdeen was in 1974, so he and others who are involved are already looking forward to the 50th show in 2024.

In 2018, a Case 150-horsepower steam-powered tractor that was built from scratch debuted at the James Valley Threshing Show. That year, Olson said, there were probably around 8,000 people who attended. And while many showed up for the impressive tractor, the only one of its kind in the world, they found so much more, he said.

Kevin Anderson has also been working with the event since it moved to Andover. He thinks perhaps 10,000 people attended the 2018 show to see the Case 150.

His son, Kory, led the effort to build the machine. In 2008, he started making wooden patterns out of mahogany that were used to create all of the castings for

the engine. And that was after a trip to the Case plant in Racine, Wisconsin, two years earlier where he was given a tour of the archives and paged through steam engine prints, making all the copies he wanted to guide his endeavor.

Fast-forward to last fall, after heaps of planning and building, and the Case 150 was certified as the Guinness world record for largest steam-powered tractor in operation.

Much of the work on the 750,000 behemoth was done at Anderson Industries and Dakota Foundry, both of which are based in Webster.

It can sometimes overshadow other events at the threshing show. But Olson and Kevin Anderson want visitors to know there are plenty more activities on the 65 acres owned by the threshing association.

There's the parade with more than 250 entries, a working saw mill, steam and gas plowing, threshing, a quilt show, a kiddie tractor pull, antique tractors of all kinds, a car show, spinning and weaving, blacksmith demonstrations, a toy and doll show, live music and more.

And while some people might traditionally associate tractors and fieldwork with men, that's not the case, Anderson said.



It took nearly 10 years to build a Case 150-horsepower steam-powered tractor from scratch. Photo courtesy of Kory Anderson and James Valley Threshers Association

Not with the Ladies of Steam. The program is run by women and offers other women a chance to learn about and ride an old-fashioned steam tractor.

“They don’t mind getting greasy,” Anderson said of the Ladies of Steam.

The program is a way to attract new and younger members to the association, he said.

Anderson’s love of antique tractors, especially steam tractors, is one of the reasons he’s remained active in the group through the decades. But the older generation is slowly handing things off to a younger crop of helpers.

Olson agrees. He said he used to be a young buck yelling at the older folks that they didn’t know what they were doing. Now, the tables have turned.

The threshing show is a celebration of harvest and history and a chance for friends to gather as summer comes to an end, he said.

“It’s a reflection of the past,” Olson said. “It’s the way all of our ancestors did stuff. Everything was manual labor back then.”

Last year, the Case 150 pulled a

50-bottom plow. It’s believed to be a world record, though that has yet to be verified.

The tractor will be at this year’s show, but there are no plans to attempt more records, Anderson said.

The 2023 James Valley Threshing Show will be Sept. 8, 9 and 10 at Thresherman’s Park in Andover. Admission is \$10 a day or \$25 for the entire weekend.

There’s a smaller threshing show in Twin Brooks, but some of the other regional shows have faded away.

That’s why the Andover event keeps looking to the future.

The association awards a scholarship each year that covers the tuition for a young person to attend the University of Rollag Steam School in Minnesota in spring. And organizers send out invitations to all schools within 100 miles of Andover that offer students free admission on the show’s first day.

It’s a way to share the history of agriculture and, with luck, plant a seed.

“The future of the show is the young kids,” Anderson said.



A parade with more than 250 entries each year is one of the most popular events during the James Valley Threshing Show in Andover each September. Photo courtesy of James Valley Threshers Association

## REGISTER TO WIN!

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August 14-17  
**Turner County Fair**  
680 E 2nd St,  
Parker, SD  
605-297-4428

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.

**JULY 21-23**  
**Winner Elks 54th Annual Rodeo**  
Winner, SD  
605-842-5830

**JULY 28-29**  
**Farley Fest**  
Lake Farley Park  
Milbank, SD  
www.farleyfest.com

**JULY 28-30**  
**Clear Lake Days**  
Clear Lake, SD  
clearlakedays.com

**JULY 29**  
**BBQ Pit Row and Car Show**  
Winner, SD  
605-842-1533

**JULY 30**  
**Bergen Threshing Bee**  
9 a.m.  
Bristol, SD  
605-237-0310

**AUG 5-6**  
**Pioneer Power Threshing Show**  
MN Machinery Museum  
Hanley Falls, MN  
507-828-9666

**AUG 10-13**  
**Custer County Fair**  
Hermosa, SD

**AUG 11**  
**Northern Bull Riding Tour Finals Bull-a-Rama**  
Geddes, SD  
605-680-2763

**AUG 13-14**  
**Twin Brooks Threshing Show**  
Featuring Allis Chalmers  
Twin Brooks, SD  
605-880-2884

**AUG 19**  
**Yankton Extreme Bull Riding**  
7:30 a.m.  
Yankton Rodeo Arena  
Yankton, SD  
605-760-2153

**AUG 21**  
**30th Annual Bishop's Cup Golf Tournament**  
Minnehaha Country Club and  
The Country Club of Sioux Falls  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-988-3765

**SEPT 2**  
**Hidewood Valley Barn Dance**  
7 p.m.  
47236 183rd St  
Clear Lake, SD

**SEPT 4**  
**Hidewood Valley Steam Threshing Show**  
Steam Whistle Blows  
1 p.m.  
47236 183rd St  
Clear Lake, SD

**SEPT 8-10**  
**James Valley Threshing & Tractor Show**  
World's Largest Steam Traction Engine  
Andover, SD  
605-868-3242

**SEPT 16**  
**SD Coin & Stamp Convention**  
Scherr-Howe Area  
Mobridge, SD

**SEPT 22-24**  
**Coal Springs Threshing Bee**  
Meadow, SD  
605-788-2229

**SEPT 23**  
**Springfield Dakota Senior Meals Fall Festival**  
9 a.m.  
Springfield Community Building  
Springfield, SD

**SEPT 29-30**  
**Junkin' Market Days**  
Ramkota Exhibit Hall  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-941-4958

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