



# Cooperative Connections



**Ready to Run:  
Road Races,  
Marathons,  
and Half-  
Marathons  
Hit Region**

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**Celebrating  
Midsummer  
at Dalesburg**

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# Five Teens to Represent WCEC on D.C. Youth Tour

West Central Electric announces five area high school juniors will represent the cooperative on the 2019 Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. As this year's Youth Tour winners, Dylan Iwan

of Murdo, Ella Hand of Ft. Pierre, James Muirhead of Presho, Lilli Moore of Murdo, and Josie Rush of Philip will travel with other South Dakota teens to Washington, D.C., on June 13. While there they will

spend a full week touring the nation's capital and learning about the process of government, rural electrification and cooperatives. The students will return to South Dakota on June 20.

## Meet your 2019 Rural Electric Youth Tour Winners:

### Dylan Iwan

I am currently a 16-year-old junior at Jones County High School. I live in Murdo, S.D. I have lived in Murdo for about 10 years and previously lived in Alliance, Neb., and White River, S.D. I am interested in history, philosophy and the arts. My hobbies including reading, writing, gaming, and hanging out with friends. I have been involved with 4-H for around six years, National Honor Society for two years, student council for three years and school play for two years. I have a 3.7 GPA and am ranked No. 1 in my class.



**Dylan Iwan**

### Ella Hand

I am a junior at Stanley County High School in Ft. Pierre, S.D. I grew up on a farm/ranch in rural central South Dakota. My family includes my mom, dad, older brother and two younger sisters. I attended Cheyenne Rural School from kindergarten to seventh grade. Throughout my high school years, I have been involved with



**Ella Hand**

many activities. These include volleyball, gymnastics, track, National Honor Society, student council, Health Organization Student Association (HOSA), One Act Play, 4-H and FCA. After high school, I plan to pursue a career in the healthcare field.

### James Muirhead

My name is James Bryon Muirhead and I have lived in Presho all of my life with my parents, Scott and Julie Muirhead. I have one brother, Ian, and two sisters, Sarah and Emily. I am a junior at Lyman High School and I participate in wrestling, cross-country, track, band, choir, student council and National Honor Society. I look forward to traveling to Washington, D.C., this summer thanks to West Central Electric.



**James Muirhead**

### Lillian Moore

My name is Lilli Moore. I was born in Denver, Colo., and I am the oldest of three children. I am the daughter of Kevin and Joni Moore of Murdo. I am a junior in high school and have attended the Jones County school district since kindergarten. I am currently the secretary/treasurer of the junior class and of the Jones County

Turner Youth Foundation. I am involved in many activities such as volleyball, basketball, football and basketball cheer, track, choir, band and Turner Youth Foundation. In the summers, I work at Prairie Pizza and I am a lifeguard at the Murdo City Pool. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my friends, playing sports and doing things with my family. Thank you for selecting me for this amazing opportunity to learn more about American history!



**Lillian Moore**

### Josie Rush

My name is Josie Rush and I am a junior at Philip High School. My parents are D.J. and Amber Rush and I have one brother, Tristan. I am involved in volleyball, basketball and golf. I plan to go to college and would love to be on a golf team there. Some of my hobbies are golfing, spending time with family and friends and I also enjoy other outside activities.



**Josie Rush**

# West Central Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-988)

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Design assistance by SDREA

# WCEC Director Terms Expire

All nominating petitions shall be filed with the Secretary of the Cooperative, on or before the 20th day of July 2019, at the headquarters office of West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., Located in Murdo, S.D., for parties interested in becoming a member of West Central Electric's Board of Directors.

**Directors term vacancies include:**

**Zone 1**



**David Mertens**  
 Lyman County  
 Town Director

**Zone 3**



**Rich Bendt**  
 Jackson County  
 Town Director

**Zone 4**



**Kevin Neuhauser**  
 Haakon County  
 Rural Director

West Central Electric's Board of Directors consist of 10 members representing five zones (one town and one rural director for each zone). All director positions are based on a three-year term.

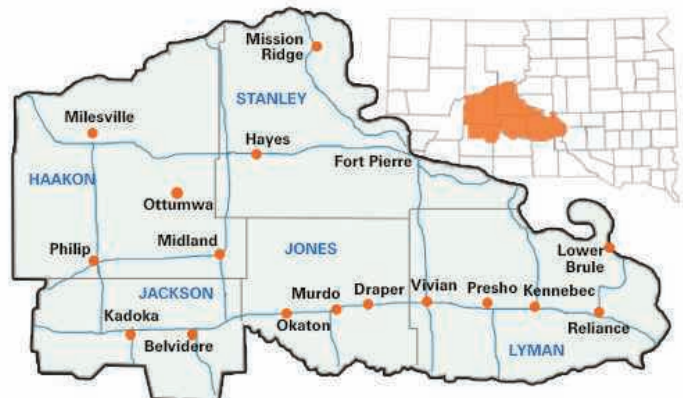
All nominating petitions shall be in such form as prescribed by the Board of Directors, but shall contain a declaration signed by the candidate, under oath, certifying to the membership that he/she possesses the necessary qualifications and is willing to serve as director.

The petition shall be signed by not less than ten (10) members of the cooperative, each of whom shall be required to write their name, address and the date and time of signing.

In the event that more than one nominating petition is filed in any one Zone, a Zone meeting shall be held in each Zone for the purpose of selecting one candidate for director to represent the members located in such Zone as their official nominee.

Each Zone Meeting shall be held in August.

Notice of the Meeting shall be sent to all members living in the appropriate Zone by first class mail or in the *West Central Electric Cooperative Connections* publication, not less than 10 days before the meeting.



## Summer Electrical Safety Tips for Kids

As school begins to let out, families are starting to enjoy some outdoor time with their young children. Backyards, local parks and pools are great places to spend your summer days, but to ensure a happy, healthy and safe summer, parents should be aware of a few electrical safety basics to share with their children.

- Be aware of power lines around you and always assume that wires are "live and dangerous." Never touch an outdoor wire with any part of your body, toys or other objects.
- Do not throw items such as gym shoes onto electric lines and equipment or try to retrieve items from around overhead power lines.
- Fly kites and model airplanes and other toys in large open areas such as a field or a park – safely away from trees and overhead power lines. Also, do not attempt to retrieve balloons, kites or other objects that may get stuck on power lines or other electrical equipment.
- Do not climb trees near power lines. Even if power lines are not touching the tree, they could touch during climbing when more weight is added to a branch.
- Never climb a utility pole or play on or around electrical equipment.
- Never post or tie signs, hang banners or tie ribbons or balloons onto utility poles or other electrical equipment. This can be dangerous to you and endanger utility workers.
- Do not go into an electric substation for any reason – even on a dare. Electric substations contain high-voltage equipment, which can kill you. Also, never attempt to rescue a pet that goes inside. Instead, call your local utility company.
- Never try to rescue a family member, friend or pet that has come into contact with any electrical equipment – Call 911 immediately.
- Keep electrical toys, appliances and tools at least 10 feet away from pools and wet surfaces.
- Never touch any electrical toys, appliance and tools while you are wet or standing in water. Energy flows easily through water, like a puddle or a pool.

Source: [www.ehstoday.com](http://www.ehstoday.com)



# Hazard Recognition

**HAZARDS ARE EVERYWHERE. WHAT RISKS AREN'T YOU SEEING?**

NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH 2019  
nsc.org/nsm

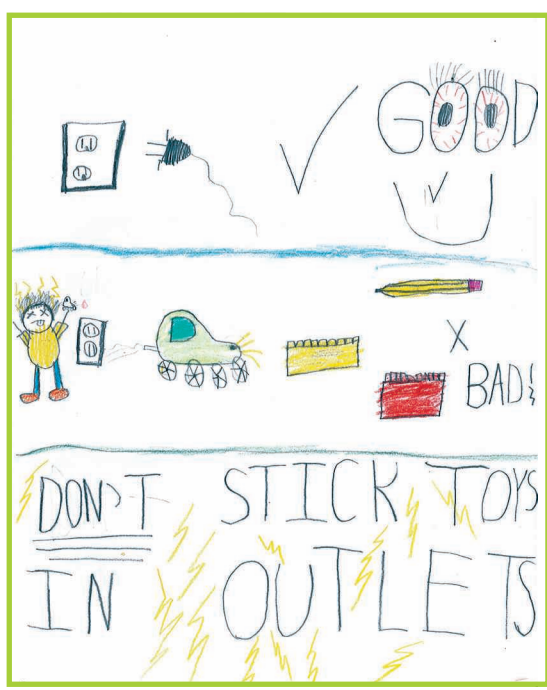



# Falls

**DON'T GET TRIPPED UP! CLEAN UP SPILLS IMMEDIATELY.**

NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH 2019  
nsc.org/nsm

## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



**"Don't stick toys in outlets"**

**Jarron Kruger,**  
8 years old

Jarron is the son of Jarrod and Cadgie Kruger, Dell Rapids, S.D.

They are members of Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, S.D.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.



# Dairy Delicious

## Orange Cream Chiller

3 oz. orange juice concentrate  
1 cup milk  
1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt

1 small frozen banana  
1 tsp. honey  
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

Combine all ingredients; blend until smooth. Serves 2.

**Stephanie Fossum, Hudson, SD**

## Rhubarb Dessert

2 cups flour  
2 tsp. baking powder  
1/2 tsp. salt  
4 T. butter  
4 T. milk  
2 eggs, beaten

**Filling:**  
3 cups rhubarb  
1 (6 oz.) pkg. red gelatin

**Topping:**  
1 cup sugar  
1/2 cup flour  
1/3 cup butter

Combine first 6 ingredients. Pat into a 9x13-inch pan. Distribute rhubarb over crust. Sprinkle gelatin over rhubarb. Mix together topping ingredients. Sprinkle over rhubarb. Bake at 350°F. for 45 minutes.

**Roxanna Streckfuss, Mansfield, SD**

## Butter Pecan Pumpkin Dessert

3 cups pumpkin  
3 eggs  
1 cup sugar  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
1/2 tsp. nutmeg

1/2 tsp. cloves  
1 (13 oz.) can evaporated milk  
1 butter pecan cake mix  
1/2 cup butter, sliced thin  
1/2 cup chopped pecans or walnuts

Combine pumpkin and eggs. Add spices and salt to sugar. Blend sugar mixture and milk with pumpkin mixture. Pour into a 9x13-inch pan. Sprinkle cake mix over all. Top with butter slices and pecans. Bake at 350°F. for 40 to 45 minutes. Serve with whipped topping or ice cream.

**Arlene BaanHofman, Corsica, SD**

## Monkey Bread with Sausage

3/4 cup milk  
1 pkg. McCormick® Original Country Gravy Mix  
1/4 cup melted butter  
2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese, divided

3 (7.5 oz. each) cans refrigerated buttermilk biscuits  
1/2 lb. ground breakfast sausage, cooked and drained

Mix milk, gravy mix and melted butter with whisk in large bowl until well blended. Reserve 1/2 cup of gravy mixture; set aside. Cut biscuits into quarters. Add biscuit pieces to gravy mixture in large bowl; gently toss to coat. Stir in 1-1/2 cups cheese and cooked sausage until well blended. Place biscuit mixture into greased 10-cup bundt pan. Pour reserved gravy mixture over top. Bake at 350°F for 35 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining 1/2 cup cheese. Bake 5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Cool in pan 5 to 10 minutes. To unmold, loosen sides of monkey bread from pan with a knife. Invert, cheese side up, onto serving plate. Makes 12 servings.

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 321, Total Fat 17g, Saturated Fat 8g, Sodium 855mg, Cholesterol 37mg, Carbohydrates 31g, Protein 11g, Dietary Fiber 1g*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Goat Milk Fudge

1 lb. powdered sugar  
1/2 cup cocoa powder  
1/2 cup butter

1/4 cup whole goat milk (may use cow milk)  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1/2 cup nuts, optional

Combine sugar and cocoa in large microwavable bowl; make a well in the center. Place cut-up butter and milk in well; do not stir. Microwave on HIGH for 2 minutes; add vanilla. Blend with stick blender or mixer until smooth; stir in nuts. Pour into greased 8x8-inch square pan. Refrigerate until firm; cut into squares.

**Jersi Kruger, 5 years old, Dell Rapids, SD**

Please send your favorite dessert, vegetarian or garden produce 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 2019. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.



WEST CENTRAL ELECTRIC CO-OP INC.

The original co-op's headquarters, built in 1949, once had experienced a major fire prior to the co-op purchase in 1951. In the mid-80s, the true age was starting to show in the building which included a leaking roof. A new building was constructed in 1986 at a cost of \$340,000. The West Central Electric main office stands on the east side of Murdo's Main Street.

# A LASTING LEGACY

## After Four Decades, West Central Electric's Steve Reed Ready to Hand-off Reins

**Tom Griffith**

Freelance Writer

When a career begins, it's difficult to know where the trail will lead. In the transient setting of today, professions often carry a person on a path far from home, away from family and acquaintances and absent familiar surroundings.

But, for Steve Reed, a lifetime of commitment to the cooperative family at West Central Electric has meant 40-plus years of a recognizable South Dakota skyline and fields and farms and friends as welcoming and plentiful as the power poles he passes every day.

As Steve approaches a well-deserved retirement this fall, we'll explore the trajectory of his career, the challenges of advancing technology and sudden storms, and the legacy of one man's contribution to a small electric cooperative huddled in the middle of America.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *This is the first of a four-part series about West Central Electric Cooperative General Manager and CEO Steve Reed, who began work with the cooperative straight out of lineman's school in 1977 and never left.*

Steve Reed,  
circa 1985.





## In the beginning

You might say that early on, the concept behind electric cooperatives started flowing through Steve Reed's veins as readily as electric energy surges through an overhead line. Born Feb. 12, 1958, in Aberdeen to Kenneth and Phyllis, Steve became acquainted with cooperatives as a boy when his father, a former school teacher, became manager of Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative in Timber Lake, S.D.

Accepting the position meant a move, where Steve's mother would serve as a long-time clerk at the Dewey County Courthouse. Though he couldn't know it then, electric cooperatives would become somewhat of a family tradition for the Reeds. Among Steve's five siblings, sister Char Hager would become CEO/manager of Northern Electric Cooperative at Bath, while brother, Rick, would become Director of Video Services at Golden West Technologies in Wall.

Graduated from Timber Lake High School in 1976, Steve moved on to what was then the Mitchell Vo-Tech (now Mitchell

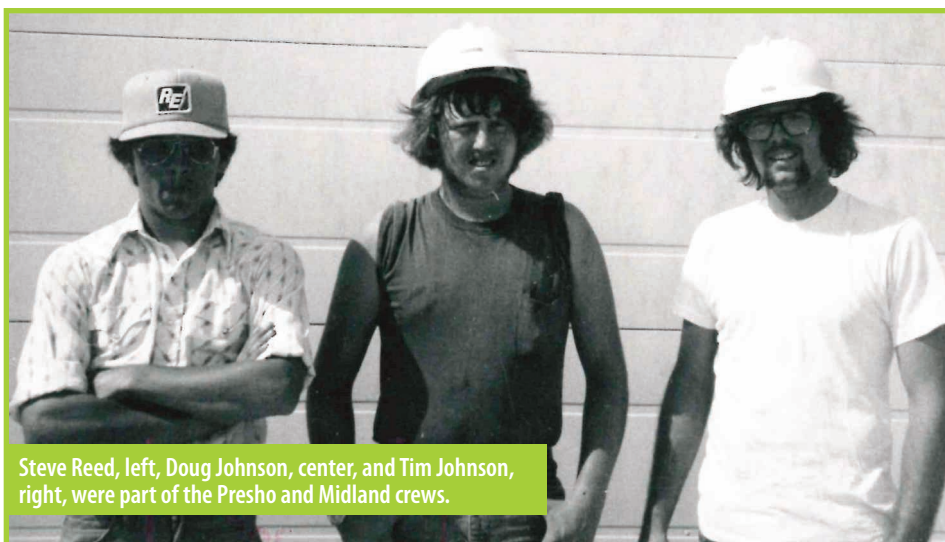
Technical Institute) for lineman's school. After a year of hands-on studies and graduation in the spring of 1977, he was hired as a lineman for the summer for West Central Electric Cooperative and assigned to Presho.

## Rentals and softball games

He remembers the small cabin he rented and the cast of characters he encountered. Steve found each of them quite different, yet committed to the same goals – keeping the power on for their cooperative members.

"There were all these guys who had been there a decade or more and I remember thinking, 'Who would want to stay somewhere 10 years or more?'" he recalls today, stifling a laugh.

Later that fall, a lineman position opened in West Central's outpost at Midland and,



Steve Reed, left, Doug Johnson, center, and Tim Johnson, right, were part of the Presho and Midland crews.

attracted by full-time employment and benefits, Steve applied for and received the job.

"Midland was such a friendly and embracing community," he recalled.

"Wherever there was a cow pasture, there was a softball field, and I quickly joined a team."

He also moved from his rental cabin into a trailer so small he had to turn sideways to get in the bathroom.

For the next 28 months, Steve continued climbing poles and turning switches, reveling in good weather, a long day's work and the satisfaction of getting his job done.

"The joy of linework is that you can look in the rearview mirror and see what you did that day," he said. "It was rewarding, pure joy and satisfaction. There's nothing more satisfying than turning a house back on that has been without power for a week and having the owners come out and thank you."

## Moving on

In fact, it was a major winter storm in October 1979 that led to his next position with West Central. Responding to outages at Murdo at two o'clock in the morning, Steve found himself driving with WCEC engineer Ralph Byre. Along the road, Byre

mentioned that West Central was in search of a member services person and told Steve he ought to look into it.

Steve talked over the position with his father, who advised him, "The fork in the road comes along a few times in your life. If you don't take it, it may never come again."

So, Steve applied for the new position and, within a month, he was moving to Murdo and was soon overwhelmed by the duties of his new job.

"I was pretty much clueless," he admitted. "The guy who had been in and out of the job, George Fosheim, did anything he could to help me because he didn't want to do it. He taught me what I needed to know."

Steve soon found himself writing a monthly newsletter and meeting with members at the various locations in the five counties. Coming off the oil embargoes



Jim Millay and Steve Reed man the prize table.

**"The joy of linework is that you can look in the rearview mirror and see what you did that day."**

continued on Page 10





The Mickelson Trail Marathon takes runners through the scenic Black Hills.

# RUNNING FOR FUN

## Marathons, Road Races and 5Ks Provide Challenge

By Jocelyn Romey

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

Among the runners lining up for the start of a well-known South Dakota marathon – the Deadwood Mickelson Trail Marathon – will be a first-time runner with co-op ties.

Corey Hines, journeyman lineman from Butte Electric Cooperative in Newell, S.D., will be running the full Mickelson Trail Marathon for the first time this year. He started running recently for the fun of it and it snowballed into a marathon challenge, one he hasn't backed down from.

Previously, Hines ran a half marathon in the same race eight years ago. Otherwise, he has had no competitive racing experience.

"I figured for whatever reason, God gave me the ability to run, so I will enjoy it while I can," Hines said.

On June 2, Hines will be racing with more than 3,000 runners from across the nation as well as Canada, Germany, Russia and Denmark. These runners have the option of competing in the Mickelson Trail full marathon, half marathon or relay race. Beginning in Rochford, S.D., runners will experience the beauty of the Black Hills before finishing at the historical Engine House in Deadwood. Black Hills Electric Cooperative in Custer, S.D., is a sponsor of this event.

Other prominent co-op runners throughout the state are Russell Gall, manager of Charles Mix Electric Association in Lake Andes, S.D.; Dick Johnson, general manager and CEO of



Butte Electric Cooperative Journeyman Lineman Corey Hines has been training for the Mickelson Trail Marathon.



### Did you Know?

The modern marathon that many competitive runners enjoy has historical roots. The name itself is derived from a Greek legend in 490 B.C. that tells the story of a messenger who raced nearly 25 miles from the site of Marathon to Athens to deliver news of a Greek victory over invading Persians. Unfortunately, the story ends poorly for the messenger who died from exhaustion after delivering his news.

From this legend, a formalized race called a marathon was created. The official length we know today of 26.2 miles was originated in the 1908 Olympics hosted in London when Queen Alexandra planned the route – which was consequently 26.2 miles. Since then, the length of the race stuck.

West River Electric Association in Wall, S.D.; and Tim McCarthy, general manager and CEO of Sioux Valley Energy in Colman, S.D.

Gall has a history of competing in Tough Mudders, which entail a 12-mile run through various obstacles that include racing with a partner through mud, water, ice and electric fencing while climbing barriers, swinging from ropes, pushing blocks and lifting a number of heavy items.

“My training was foremost running. I tell anyone wanting to do a Tough Mudder that the first thing you have to do is be able to run a 5k without stopping,” Gall said. “The second part of training for the Tough Mudder is upper body strength, as in lots of push-ups and pull ups.”

Johnson is another runner who began running half marathons around his 50th birthday during the half Mickelson Trail Marathon. He finds enjoyment in running to relieve stress.

“It’s something I can do pretty much whenever I can fit it in, although I do most of my running early in the mornings,” Johnson said. “I don’t especially like later in the day as I struggle to motivate myself to do it then.”

He also noted that running was good for his overall health, even while jokingly stating that you cannot “outrun a bad diet!”

McCarthy is a well-known runner in many national marathons and was featured in the October 1996 edition of Runner’s World magazine after participating in a marathon in Illinois.

“On any given day, I will run about three miles up to about a half marathon (13.1 miles) depending on the time I have and how I feel,” McCarthy said.

“Running is a place I can go to sort out a lot of things whether the issues I’m facing are personal or professional.”

Even though he has retired from his more competitive marathons, McCarthy is still addicted to running and says he runs for physical and mental health.



Medals commemorate some of the races Tim McCarthy has run over the decades.

## Tough Mudder

Russell Gall, manager of Charles Mix Electric Association in Lake Andes, S.D., is a veteran of Tough Mudder races which combine a 12-mile run with an obstacle course. Gall said the obstacles encountered in the race rely on that strength. “The Tough Mudder had lots of obstacles with funky names.”

### Here is a list of Gall’s (least) favorites:

- **Funky Monkey** – 30 feet of monkey bars over a pool of muddy water.
- **Augustas Gloop** – traverse a small pool of muddy water, duck under obstacles and then climb the inside a 20-foot tube with water cascading down.
- **Hold Your Wood** – Carry a big hunk of log for 300 feet
- **Artic Plunge** – slide down a 10-foot tube that ends in ice water. “And I mean ICE – as in bags and bags of ice are poured into the small pool of water so you have to swim through the cubes, and duck under two obstacle walls. I drank a lot of muddy water on that one since I kept inhaling as I tried to catch my breath.”
- **Hero Carry** – carry one of your team mates for a couple hundred feet then switch off. “My daughter had blisters by the time we hit this obstacle, so I just carried her the whole way.”
- **Electro Shock Therapy** – This obstacle is just as it sounds: you run through a 50- to 75-foot of mud over hay bales. There are electric fencing strings hanging down every three feet and yes they are connected to an electric fencer. “That one is tough as the first time I went through it, it knocked me down to my knees.”
- **Berlin Wall** – A 20-foot high wooden wall that you have to ascend on one side, using a rope, go over the top and down the other side with another rope.
- **Block Ness Monster** – Two 4-foot by 4-foot rolling pin blocks that are half submerged in a pool of muddy water. The teams have to push the block from one side and hang on it as you go over the top. This keeps it rotating so your team can make it over.

And a tie for the worst obstacle goes to:

- **The Death March** – In Colorado it was a 5 mile trek up the side of a mountain. “By the time we made it to the summit we were all sunburned and tired.”
- **Everest** – It’s a half pipe about 15-foot high (Google Tough Mudder Everest) that you have to try to get over. “Mind you are wet and usually covered in mud so this obstacle is definitely a team effort. I would never have made it was it not for the group of strangers that pulled me up.”

<https://toughmudder.com/obstacles>

**Continued from Page 7**

of the 1970s, a time in which government mandates led cooperatives to encourage customers to use less of what they were selling, Steve quickly learned to be honest with members and to develop trust.

Through it all, Steve would think back to those days as a boy, the youngest of four, when he would tag along with his father as he traveled Moreau-Grand’s service territory, listening in as his dad met with board chairmen and members.

“I was exposed to the business side of cooperatives early in life,” he said. “Those conversations my dad had enlightened me about the world of electric cooperatives and how people worked together.”

Among Steve’s biggest initial hurdles was becoming comfortable speaking to groups, teaching members about peak alerts and asking folks to cut back on the use of electrical power. Although he admitted it took him “a long time to get there,” he found as a 20-something he enjoyed meeting with members. Soon he was taking an active interest in the management and business side of his cooperative.

“In small co-ops you don’t wear one hat,” he learned. “Things needed to be done and you did it. It evolves quicker than you think. You jump in, you explore and assist others and by doing that, you broaden your horizons. In doing so, you get involved in things you never planned to do.”

**Learning the ropes**

As he delved deeper into the minutia of his electric cooperative, Steve learned about handling rate issues and projecting monthly revenues, which morphed into additional knowledge. In the process, he went back and read the minutes of every board meeting dating back to the co-op’s inception in 1949, as well as West Central’s contracts with Rushmore Electric, WAPA and other agencies.

“It helped me understand the issues of the early days and the progression of issues,” he recalled. “It also allowed me to get a handle on what our board thought over the decades and gave me insights into what a diverse group was represented by our membership and what their wants, wishes and expectations were. There was so much to learn in the bowels of our co-op’s archives. Knowing history matters.”

But, Steve is the first to acknowledge he didn’t learn it alone.

As his responsibilities increased to include external contracting, internal financials, dealing with lawsuits and handling the budgeting process, Steve notes he was guided in the early years by Office Manager Hermine Bradley and Accountant Carol Palander, who became his most ardent supporters.

“They supported and taught me in every way,” he said. “They didn’t just teach me, they explained why things were done the

way they were done.”

In 1978, Steve married and soon had three children in tow – Ryen, Lucas and Sarah.

By 1980, his diligence had earned him the title of staff assistant and in 1983, West Central board of directors named him assistant manager, another post he said he “didn’t see coming.”

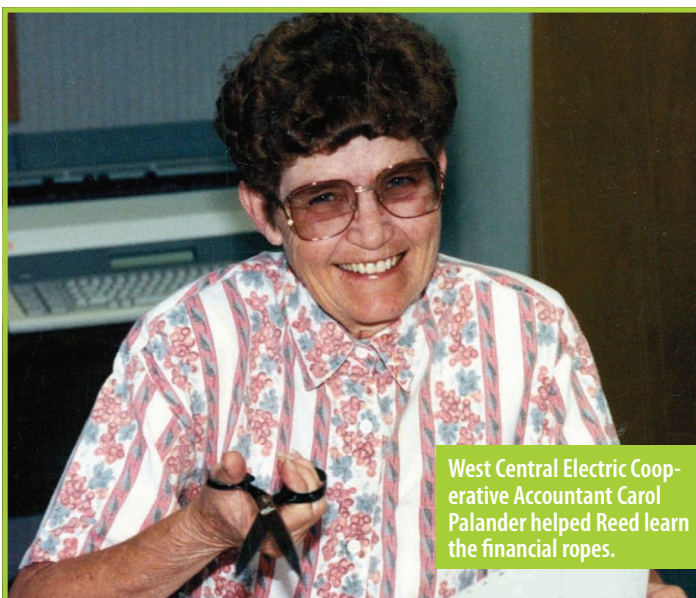
That same year, with no equity in agriculture, crop prices in the cellar, interest and inflation rates at all-time highs and rising electric costs contributing to double-digit annual increases, West Central was faced with a major decision.

**A new headquarters**

The cooperative’s headquarters, built in 1949, once had experienced a major fire prior to the co-op purchase in 1951. In the mid-80s, the true age was starting to show in the building which included a leaking roof. From 11 to 12 each Wednesday, a kid’s story hour was held. After lunch on one fateful Wednesday, just after the children had left the building, the entire conference room roof collapsed to the floor.

“We were horrified at the prospect of what could have been. It told us we didn’t have a choice,” Steve said. “We had to do something.”

But, while building a new headquarters for West Central Electric might have seemed a no-brainer to many, the state of the economy left some members questioning



West Central Electric Cooperative Accountant Carol Palander helped Reed learn the financial ropes.



Hermine Bradley was the West Central Electric office manager in Steve’s early years at the co-op.



Before construction of a new headquarters building in 1986, the co-op was plagued with a leaky roof. Employees deployed a fleet of containers ranging from coffee cans to garbage cans and even kids' swimming pools to capture water when it rained.

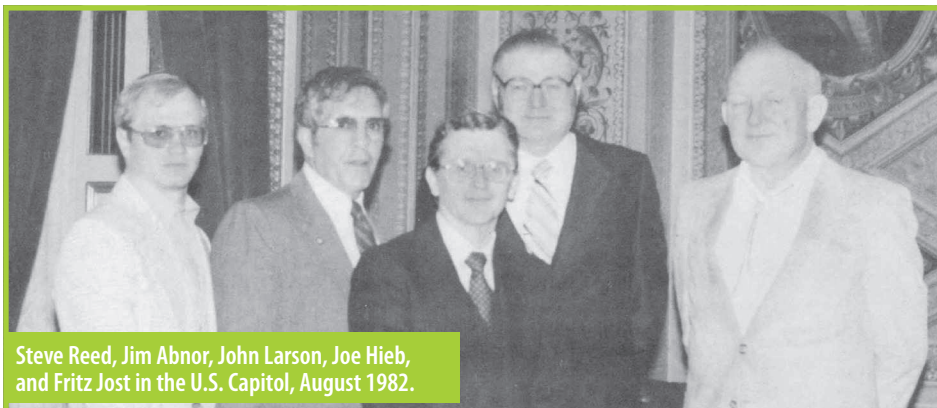


the investment in the cooperative's future. Even the co-op's board faced the decision with "considerable apprehension" and the issue generated the most calls from members of any issue during Steve's tenure.

After much study and discussion, a modest, new \$340,000 home office for West Central would eventually open on Main Street in April 1986. The site still serves as the co-op's headquarters.

Meanwhile, by 1982, General Manager Fritz Jost, Steve and members of the board were deep in contract negotiations over the Grassrope project, a large-scale irrigation project north of Lower Brule. They were also in the discussion stages of ETSI, which intended to build a massive coal slurry pipeline that would run from the coal fields of Wyoming to Louisiana using water from the Missouri River.

Then, with rate challenges, a sagging economy, a prospective new building and



Steve Reed, Jim Abnor, John Larson, Joe Hieb, and Fritz Jost in the U.S. Capitol, August 1982.

talks over the major Grassrope project coming to a head, something happened no one in West Central's orbit could have predicted.

Manager Fritz Jost and his family were celebrating the long Memorial Day weekend by camping at Oahe Reservoir in 1985, when the long-time co-op leader suffered a massive heart attack. Jost's sudden death shook the West Central

Electric Cooperative family, but no one more than Steve.

"It was shocking," he recalled with a shake of his head. "The boss is there one day and the next he's not. We weren't sure what to do. There was no succession plan."

**Up next:** *In Part II, West Central Electric searches for a new leader and Steve Reed throws his hat in the ring.*



# SMART PAYMENTS

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# Celebrating Midsommar

For 150 Years, Dalesburg Community Has Gathered in Celebration

**Brenda Kleinjan**

editor@sdea.coop

**It was important to the first Swedes who came to Dakota Territory in the 1860s.**

For the past 150 years, the community of Dalesburg in the southeast corner of South Dakota has gathered to celebrate Midsommar with a distinctly Scandinavian flair.

Every summer, the community holds the Dalesburg Midsommar Festival to honor its heritage and to celebrate its future.

The first Swedes arrived in the area of Dakota Territory in 1868, so the first Midsommar was celebrated June 24, 1869, said Ron Johnson, a member of the committee who organizes the Dalesburg Midsommar Festival set for Friday, June 21.

“We have oral history written down in the 1940s that the first Midsommar picnic was held in 1882,” said Johnson, noting that Midsommar was observed before that picnic.

Johnson noted that one settler’s memoir noted that a Swedish man arrived by train in Beresford and then headed southwest until he encountered the Midsommar



A Moeller pipe organ was added to the Dalesburg church in 1916.

gathering at Dalesburg.

By 1896, the festival had expanded to include a ball game and foot races.

“It was considered important to the first Swedes that came to this county,” said Johnson.

Around World War I, the festival moved to the grounds of the Dalesburg Lutheran Church.

“The holiday observance is older than the church,” Johnson said.

The Clay County church, located north of Vermillion, was formed in 1871 to serve a largely Swedish community in what was then Dakota Territory. The congregation first met in a



Dancing around a midsummer pole with ring dances is part of the celebration.





Weather permitting, Midsummer performances take place on the grounds of Dalesburg Lutheran Church.

sod house before building it's first church in 1874. By 1897, the current sanctuary was constructed.

The farming community of Dalesburg (in Swedish: Dalsborg) is from Dalarna – the name of the province from where many of the first homesteaders came in central Sweden. Today the residents of the Dalesburg Community are served by the Vermillion, Beresford, Centerville, and Burbank Post Offices.

About 600 people attend the festival each summer. More than 300 people eat at the Scandinavian smörgåsbord held in the church's basement while others visit one of several food stands on the church grounds at 30595 University Road, Vermillion.

“The smörgåsbord supper features Swedish-American dishes typical of what people ate 100 to 125 years ago,” Johnson said. “We still try to remember these old recipes and things.”

Several community members gathered in May to help make potatis korv, a Swedish potato sausage that will be served in June.

The festival starts at 1 p.m. and concludes with a ballgame that night.

This year's featured performer is Church Suchy, a performer and songwriter from Mandan, N.D.

“He does stories about rural life in the 1950s into the 1970s,” said Johnson, noting that past performers at the festival have included visiting groups from Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

High water in the area will make the trek to the festival a bit tricky, but well worth the drive.

Among the routes Johnson recommended were to turn off of Interstate 29 at the Beresford exit and go west a ways and then south on University Road or alternatively go to Vermillion and head north on University Road.

Johnson had one last bit of advice for those venturing to the 2019 festival.

“It's a good idea to bring your own lawn chairs and insect repellent, especially this year with the water.”

## Midsommar at Dalesburg

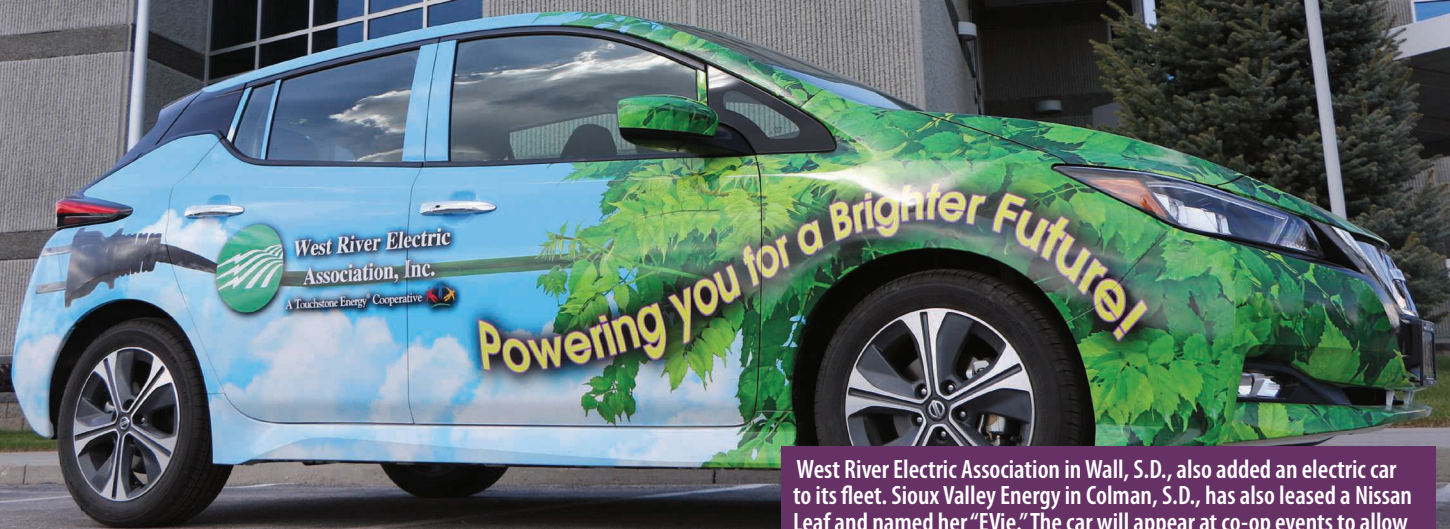
Each year the Dalesburg community celebrates the traditional Midsummer (or Midsommar) Festival. The event includes afternoon programs, a Swedish meatball dinner and a free evening concert. It is held on the grounds of the Dalesburg Lutheran Church.

### Schedule

#### Friday, June 21

- 1 p.m. – Food Stand/Inflatables/ Country Store Opens
- 2 p.m. – Afternoon Program
- 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. – Scandinavian Smorgasbord
- 7 p.m. – Evening Program
- 8:30 p.m. – Ball Game





West River Electric Association in Wall, S.D., also added an electric car to its fleet. Sioux Valley Energy in Colman, S.D., has also leased a Nissan Leaf and named her "EVie." The car will appear at co-op events to allow members to kick the tires and maybe even test drive her!

# IS AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE RIGHT FOR YOU?

The Economics of Electric Vehicles Are Affected by Geography, Climate and How Your Electricity Is Generated.

**Paul Wesslund**

NRECA

Should your next car be an electric vehicle? The answer could depend on where you live.

Electric vehicles account for just 1.2 percent of the U.S. vehicle market, but sales are booming, growing 25 percent last year. And they're getting better and cheaper as researchers improve the batteries that power them. Here's a guide to help you decide if an electric car is for you – or if you just want to be smarter about one of the next big things in energy.

The first thing to realize about electric cars is they can drive more than enough miles for you on a single charge, even if you live out in the wide-open countryside.

## Location issue #1: The Distance Myth

Try keeping track of your actual daily use, advises Brian Sloboda, a program and product manager at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

"If you're an insurance salesman, you're logging a lot of miles, so an electric car's not going to be for you," he says, noting that a typical range for an electric car today is more than 100 miles and ranges of 150 to 250 miles are becoming common. "But if you look at how many miles you drive in a day, for most people in the United States, even in rural areas, that number is under 40

miles per day. So if your car has a range of 120 miles, that's a lot of wiggle room."

According to the Federal Highway Administration, the average American drives 25 miles a day and for rural areas, that average is 34 miles a day.

Sloboda says another reason it's worth thinking realistically about your daily mileage comes from the most likely way an electric car would be refueled. When an electric car is done driving for the day, you can plug it in to recharge overnight. Essentially, you're topping off the gas tank while you sleep, giving you a fully-charged battery every morning.

### There are three ways to charge an electric car:

- **Level 1** – The simplest charging technique is to plug the car into a standard home outlet. That will charge the battery at a rate that will add from two to five miles to its range each hour. That's pretty slow, but Sloboda notes the battery might start the charging session already partly charged, depending on how far it's driven that day.
- **Level 2** – Faster charging will require a professional installer to upgrade the home's voltage for a unit that will add between 10 and 25 miles of range for each hour of charging – a rate that would fully charge the battery overnight. Sloboda says installing a Level 2 charger in a house or garage would run \$500 to \$800



for the equipment, plus at least that much for the labor. Timers can also be used to charge the vehicle in the middle of the night when electric consumption is typically lower.

- **Level 3** – DC fast charge requires specialized equipment more suited to public charging stations and will bring a car battery up to 80 percent of capacity in 30 minutes. Sloboda warns this high-speed technique should only be used for special long-distance driving, since it can degrade the battery over time. That's also why DC chargers shouldn't be used to bring the battery up to 100 percent.

## Location issue #2: Off-peak Electric Rates

What you pay to charge your electric car could also depend on where you live, says Sloboda. He advises checking to see whether your local electric co-op offers a lower rate to charge an electric vehicle overnight, when the utility has a lower demand for electricity.

"It's different depending on where you are in the country," says Sloboda. Some local co-ops have fairly stable electric demand throughout a typical day, so they may not offer a special electric vehicle rate. He adds, "There are areas of the country where the on-peak, off-peak difference in price is extreme," so that it might make financial sense for the utility to offer an overnight charging rate.

Another factor affecting the economics of an electric car is, of course, the cost of the vehicle.

"These cars are really in the luxury and performance car categories," says Sloboda. As electric cars improve, projections put their cost coming down to match conventional vehicles by about the year 2025. But today, the average electric car costs close to \$40,000, compared with less than \$30,000 for an internal combustion engine.

## Location issues #3 and #4: Environment and Geography

For many people, one of the biggest selling points for electric cars is their effect on the environment and that can also depend on where you live.

The sources of electricity for a local utility vary across the country – some areas depend heavily on coal-fired power plants, others use larger shares of solar or wind energy. One major environmental group analyzed all those local electric utility fuel mixes and determined that for most of the country, electric vehicles have much less of an effect on the environment than conventional vehicles. That study by the Union of Concerned Scientists shows that in the middle part of the country, driving an electric vehicle has the equivalent environmental benefits of driving a gasoline-powered car that gets 41 to 50 miles per gallon. For much of the rest of the country, it's like driving a car that gets well over 50 miles per gallon.

"Seventy-five percent of people now live in places where driving on electricity is cleaner than a 50 MPG gasoline car," says the report from the Union of Concerned Scientists.

Other local factors that will affect an electric car's performance include climate and geography, says Sloboda. The range of the vehicle will be affected by whether you regularly drive up and down mountains or make a lot of use of the heater or air conditioner.

Sloboda concedes that electric vehicles are not for everybody – yet. One limit to their growth is that no major carmaker offers an espe-

cially popular choice, a pickup truck.

Sloboda says there's no technological barrier to making an electric pickup. He even suggests possible advantages: a heavy battery in the bottom would lower the center of gravity for better handling and at a remote worksite, the battery could run power tools.

"Within the next 24 months, I believe there will be a credible pickup truck on the market," says Sloboda. "It's just a matter of time."

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation's landscape.

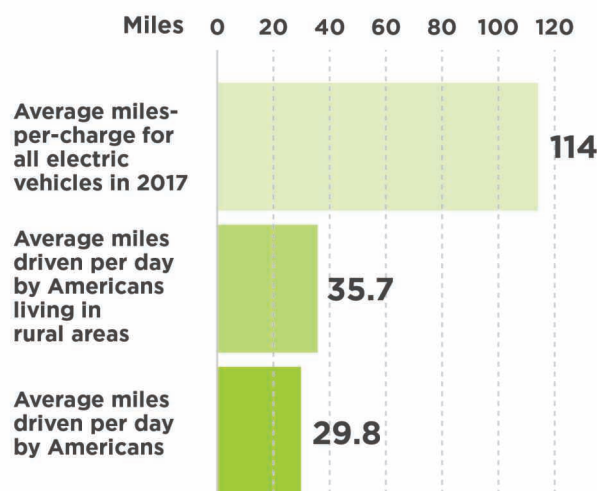
## Easing Electric Vehicle Range Anxiety

Range anxiety—fear of the battery running out before you're able to recharge—is a roadblock to wider use of electric vehicles.

But statistics show this fear is overblown, even if you live in a rural area. While extra planning may be needed for vacations or longer trips, nearly everyone's daily driving needs can be met with one charge.



### AVERAGE MILE COMPARISON



And when you're done driving your electric vehicle for the day, you can plug it in to recharge overnight, "topping off the tank" while you sleep!

Sources: Dept. of Energy, Energy Information Administration, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety.



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**Saturdays, May 4-Oct. 26**

Capital City Farmers' Market, 9 a.m. to noon, Free parking lot on the corner of Sioux Ave and Coteau Street, Pierre, SD, 605-222-1290  
[www.capcitymarket.com](http://www.capcitymarket.com)

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**Thursdays, June 6-Aug. 22**

Tales on the River, Moose Club, 7 p.m., Free program, Speaker schedule at [www.shortgrassarts.org](http://www.shortgrassarts.org), Will not be held July 4, Fort Pierre, SD

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**May 31-June 2**

Fort Sisseton Historical Festival, Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474

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**May 31-June 2**

Wheel Jam, Huron, SD, 605-353-7340

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**June 1**

Annual Casey Tibbs Match of Champions, Fort Pierre, SD, 605-494-1094

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**June 1-2**

Spring Volksmarch, Crazy Horse, SD, 605-673-4681

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**June 5-6**

Oahe Shrine Circus, Expo Center, 4 and 8 p.m., Fort Pierre, SD

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**June 7**

East of Westerville with Kenny Putnam Kiwanis Club Concert, 7 p.m., Riggs Theatre, Pierre, SD, 605-280-0818

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**June 7**

JD Weischedel Memorial Bull Riding, Calcutta at 6:30 p.m., Bull Riding at 7p.m., Dance to follow at the Agar Fire Department, Agar, SD



**June 29:**  
Rhubarb Festival,  
Leola, SD,  
605-824-0014

Photo courtesy: McPherson County Herald

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**June 7-9**

Black Hills Quilt Show & Sale, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

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**June 8-9**

Siouxland Renaissance Festival, Sioux Falls, SD, 1-866-489-9241

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**June 14**

Match Bronc Ride, Philip, SD, 605-859-2516

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**June 14-16**

Scotty Philip Days, Philip, SD, 605-859-2516

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**June 15**

Demolition Derby, Philip, SD, 605-859-2516

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**June 21-23**

Scavenger's Journey, A treasure trove event with antiques, rummages and more stretching from Mt. Vernon to Kadoka, SD, Contact Elaine Titze at 605-999-7287, [www.scavengersjourney.com](http://www.scavengersjourney.com)

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**June 21-July 12**

River City Friday Nights "Bridging Families and Communities Together!" Weekly Fridays 6 to 10 p.m., Live music, vendors, kids activities, beer garden, Free Admission, Main Street, Chamberlain, SD, Contact Mollie at 605-682-9051

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**June 28**

Naja Shrine Circus, Rodeo Grounds, 6 p.m. MTN, Wall, SD, Contact Joel at 605-209-2556

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**June 28-29**

"Fishing for a Cure" Ladies Only Fishing Tournament, Rules Meeting Friday at 6 p.m., Tournament Saturday at 8 a.m., American Creek Marina, Chamberlain, SD, Contact Kelli at 605-730-1967

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**June 28-29**

Senior Games, Madison, SD, Contact Bernie Schuurmans at 605-270-3327

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**July 11-13**

Senior Games, Aberdeen, SD, Contact Gene Morsching at 605-626-7015

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**Tuesdays, July 16-Aug. 13**

Farmers' Market, 5 to 7:30 p.m., Deadwood Street, Fort Pierre, SD, 605-222-1290, [www.capcitymarket.com](http://www.capcitymarket.com)

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**July 19-20**

Gumbo Ridge Bronc Ride and Ranch Rodeo, Murdo, SD, 605-669-3031

**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.**