



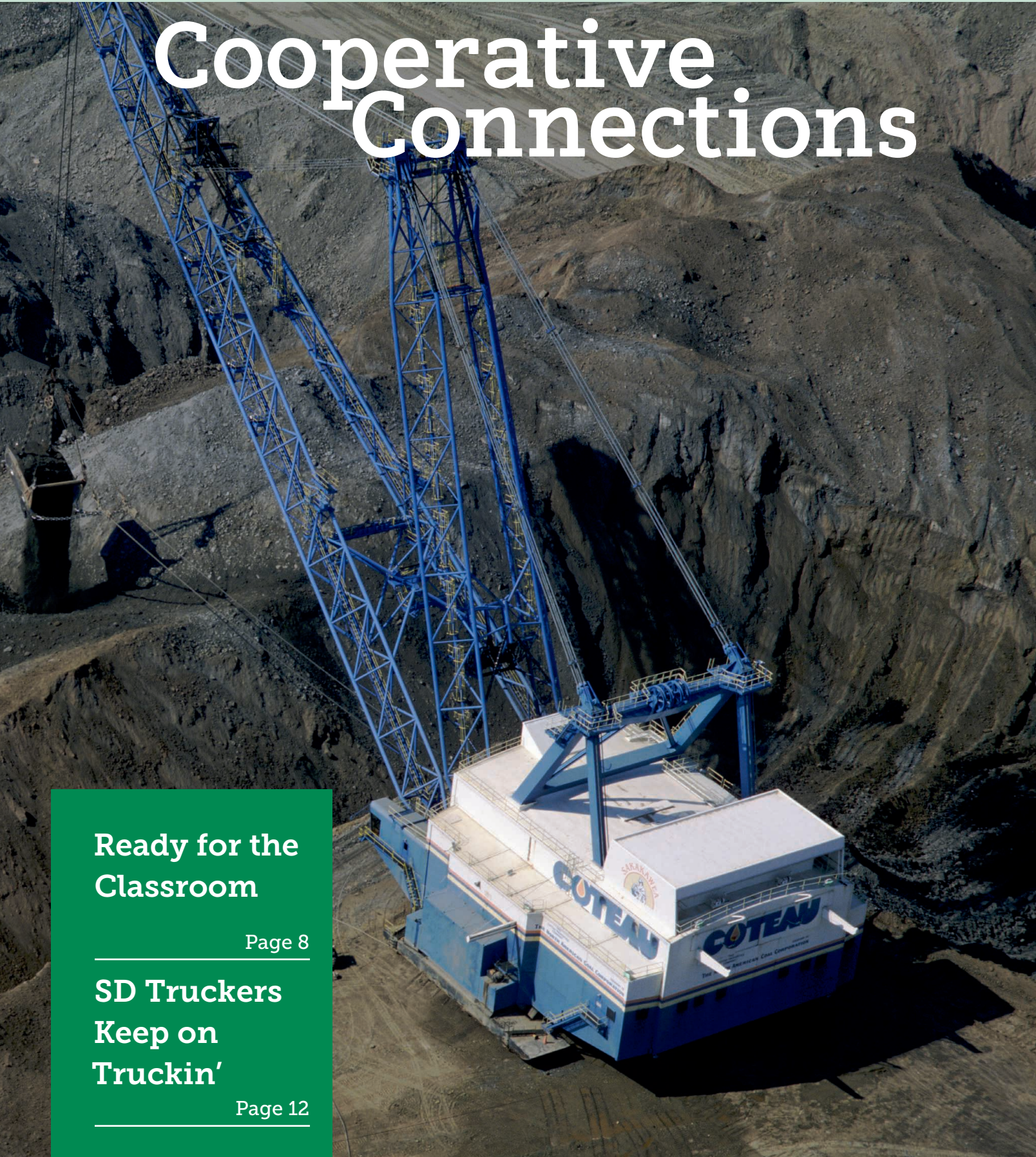
Cooperative Connections

**Ready for the
Classroom**

Page 8

**SD Truckers
Keep on
Truckin'**

Page 12





Members of the Philip Fire Department were able to upgrade their pumper truck with assistance of a Rural Electric Development Loan.

PUMPING SUPPORT TO OUR COMMUNITIES

WCE Assists Philip Fire Department with Rural Electric Development Loan

Joni Moore

West Central Member Services

West Central Electric presented the Philip Volunteer Fire Department with a check for \$70,000 for a Rural Economic Development Loan. The loan was used to help purchase a new pumper truck.

The new pumper truck was needed because the pumper they were using was bought brand new in 1985, but it was starting to show its age. Once a pumper truck reaches 20 years old, they must be certified every year that they are still able to pump the required amount of water. The last couple of inspections were showing that the pump was slowing down and was getting close to missing the cut-off. That's when the Philip VFD knew they needed to get a new pumper ordered. Fortunately, they had been saving for about ten years for the inevitable day when they needed to purchase a new pumper truck.

Unfortunately, most of the companies that make pumper trucks would not build one for less than \$285,000. Then Rosenbauer out of Lyons, S.D., came through. "We needed a bare-bones, no fancy stuff pumper," said Chief Marty Hansen.

Rosenbauer's was able to build a pumper for \$213,500. It can pump 1,250 gallons per minute whereas the old pumper can only

do 1,000 gallons. The new pumper has a poly-coated tank that will never rust out while the old pumper has a stainless-steel tank that will eventually rust out and need to be replaced, which has already happened once.

The new pumper is a lot easier to operate, but there is a learning curve since nearly everything has been updated since 1985. Another improvement is the ladder racks are now enclosed in the truck. This will eliminate inadvertent collisions which is understandable in the rush and adrenaline of an emergency situation. Finding parts for the old pumper was quite a challenge as well.

Marty Hansen has been the chief for about three years but had a previous stint which gives him a total of 17 years as chief. The Philip VFD has 39 volunteers. "We've been lucky because we have quite a few younger guys sign up," added Marty. They are responsible for about 700 square miles and fight anywhere from 15-40 fires a year.

The Philip VFD is pleased that West Central was able to give them the Rural Economic Development Loan. "Even though we have been scrimping and saving for 10 years, prices just keep going up faster than we can save. The loan is great because we know what the interest rate is going to be and what the payments are," said Marty.

West Central Electric

Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-988)

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Design assistance by SDREA

Spring Has Arrived



Steve Reed, CEO

steve.reed@wce.coop

We are almost done with summer and wonder where it went. Like the farming community, this has been a challenging year to get things done. We are still significantly behind schedule and it is unlikely we will get the 30 miles of overhead to underground conversion completed. We will keep plugging away and hope for a late fall.

We are in the process of making plans for our 70th annual meeting and encourage you to make plans to attend Oct. 3 in Murdo.

We are continuing in a holding pattern regarding Keystone XI project and hope that by the courts will allow the project to proceed in the near future.

Steven J. Reed, West Central Electric



Your co-op's business office will be closed Monday, Sept. 2, to allow employees to spend holiday time with family and friends.

As always, call after-hours dispatch at 605-669-8100 if you should experience electric service problems.

Join Us!

Come join us Oct. 2 at the Harold Thune Auditorium in Murdo, S.D., for West Central Electric's 70th Annual Meeting!

Door prizes are a 20-ounce Yeti® tumbler and cash prizes will also be awarded during the evening!

Hope to see you there!



Back to School Safety

As many prepare for this upcoming school year, we want to share some electrical safety tips that are useful for students of all ages.

Elementary School Students

- Never throw shoes onto power lines and definitely don't try to get them off of the lines.
- Writing utensils and other supplies like paper clips should never be placed in or near electrical outlets, even if you think the outlet isn't working.
- Make sure your hands and the area around you are dry before plugging something in. This is especially important in science labs where there are usually several sets of sinks, an eye wash, chemicals, etc.
- When unplugging things from an electrical outlet, always hold the plastic base to pull the plug out.

Middle/High School Students

- If you've just received the privilege of driving to school with your newly obtained driver's license, pay close to attention on those morning and afternoon drives for utility crews at work. Should you be involved in an accident involving a power line or pole, assume live electricity is outside of the car and use extreme caution.
- Always steer clear of pad-mount transformers – the big green metal boxes. All electrical equipment on school property should be avoided due to the possible dangers of electrical shock.
- Always be cautious in science classes, specifically the ones with labs. Sinks, eye washes, chemicals – it's likely your hands or the area near you will be wet. Keep everything dry and use caution when plugging in equipment.

College Students

- Get in the habit of unplugging what's not in use.
- Use only approved electrical products with the mark of a recognized certification agency.
- Choose a power strip with a heavy-gauge cord that is approved by a recognized certification agency.
- Replace frayed or damaged extension cords with new ones.
- Keep extension cords out from under carpet, rugs or furniture as this could damage the cord and also present a fire hazard.
- Keep flammable materials such as books, paper and clothing away from heaters, stoves and other heating sources.
- Never leave cooking appliances unattended.
- Plug portable heaters and air conditioners directly into the outlet. If an extension cord is needed, to prevent overheating and risk of fire, use only one that is rated for this purpose to ensure that the cord can handle the electrical current.
- Never remove the third prong from an electrical product. The third prong is the grounding device and is a critical safety feature.
- Keep gadgets and cords away from bedding and curtains. The heat from a laptop charger or mini-fridge can start an electrical fire if left in contact with flammable material for too long.
- Avoid overloading outlets or circuits as this can cause overheating that may lead to fire.

Source: twielectric.com



KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER

IF YOU DRIVE INTO AN
ELECTRIC LINE, CALL 911
FOR HELP!



"If you drive into an electric line, call 911 for help!"

Sawyer Nelson, 12 years old

Sawyer is the son of Wes and Chris Nelson, Wolsey, S.D. They are members of Dakota Energy Cooperative, Huron, SD.

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.



Garden Goodness

Roasted Vegetables

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 tsp. garlic salt | 1 small red onion, cut into thin wedges |
| 1 tsp. Italian seasoning | 1 small zucchini, sliced |
| 1/2 tsp. fennel seed | 1 cup asparagus pieces |
| 1 small green bell pepper, cut into chunks | 1 cup red potato chunks |
| 1 small yellow squash, sliced | 2 T. oil |

Mix seasonings in small bowl. Toss vegetables and oil in large bowl. Add seasonings; toss to coat well. Spread vegetables in single layer on foil-lined 15x10x1-inch baking pan. Bake at 450°F. for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Makes 6 Servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 93, Total Fat 5g, Sodium 342mg, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 10g, Protein 2g, Fiber 2g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Apple Pie Filling

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 4-1/2 cups sugar | 1 tsp. salt |
| 1 cup cornstarch | 3 T. lemon juice |
| 2 tsp. cinnamon | 2 to 3 drops yellow food coloring |
| 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg, optional | 5-1/2 to 6 lbs. tart apples, peeled and sliced |

In a large saucepan, blend sugar, cornstarch, cinnamon and nutmeg. Add salt and stir in 10 cups water. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly. Add lemon juice and food coloring. Pack raw apples into hot jars, leaving 1-inch head space. Use spatula to help distribute syrup. Adjust lids. Process in boiling water bath – pints 15 minutes and quarts 20 minutes. Makes 6 to 8 quarts. Before serving, prepare pastry for a double crust 8- or 9-inch pie. Line pie plate with pastry, add 1 quart apple pie filling. Adjust top crust, cutting slits for escape of steam; seal edges. Bake at 400°F. for 50 minutes.

Linda Goulet, Tea, SD

Microwave Tomato Dish

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2 large, firm ripe tomatoes | 1/2 cup seasoned stuffing mix |
| 1/2 lb. ground beef | 2 beaten eggs |
| 4 T. chopped onion | Dash of pepper |
| 1/4 tsp. garlic salt | |

Cut a slice off the stem end of tomato. Scoop out pulp; place into a small glass baking dish. Combine remaining ingredients to fill tomato shell. Place filled tomatoes in dish of pulp. Cover with waxed paper. Microwave 5 to 8 minutes. Let set covered 2 minutes.

Elaine Rowett, Sturgis, SD

Kohlrabi Au Gratin

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 6 med. kohlrabi, peeled and sliced | 3/4 cup shredded American cheese |
| 3 T. flour | 1/2 cup milk |
| 3 T. margarine, melted and divided | 2 T. sliced green onion |
| 1 cup sour cream | 3/4 cup soft bread crumbs (1 slice) |

Cook kohlrabi, covered, in small amount of boiling salt water 25 minutes, drain. Blend flour into 2 T. melted margarine. Stir in sour cream, cheese, milk and onion. Cook and stir until cheese melts. Combine kohlrabi and sauce; turn into 1.5-quart casserole. Toss crumbs and remaining margarine; sprinkle over top. Bake, covered, at 350°F. for 15 minutes. Uncover and bake and additional 15 to 20 minutes. Serves 6 to 8.

Shirley Thedorff, Centerville, SD

Zucchini Chips

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 4 cups thinly sliced zucchini (about 2-3 medium) | 2 T. white balsamic vinegar |
| | 2 tsp. coarse sea salt |
| 2 T. extra virgin olive oil | |

Use a mandolin or slice zucchini as thin as possible. In a small bowl, whisk olive oil and vinegar together. Place zucchini in a large bowl and toss with oil and vinegar. Add zucchini in even layers to dehydrator then sprinkle with coarse sea salt. Depending on how thin you sliced the zucchini and on your dehydrator, the drying time will vary, anywhere from 8 to 14 hours. To make in the oven, line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Layer zucchini evenly. Bake at 200°F. for 2 to 3 hours. Rotate half way during cooking time. Store in an airtight container.

Becki Hauser, Tripp, SD

Please send your favorite pasta, slow cooker and holiday 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.



Steve Reed speaks at an annual meeting.

A Lasting Legacy: Part IV

JUDGING A MAN BY THE COMPANY HE KEEPS

Tom Griffith

Freelance Writer

It is said that you can judge a man by the company he keeps. For Steve Reed, that company has been a small electric cooperative huddled in the middle of America where he has endeavored to stay abreast of emerging technologies while building energy load and keeping his workers safe for the past four decades.

When Reed retires this fall as CEO and General Manager of West Central Electric, in his wake he'll leave behind a rock-solid cooperative positioned for the future with a sound management team as well as a cadre of friends and associates in the cooperative world who have come to respect his leadership style and his willingness to impart advice whenever called upon.

After graduating from lineman's school in Mitchell, Reed joined West Central in 1977, as an apprentice linemen and worked his way up to a journeyman lineman, before he moved to Murdo in late 1979 and was named member services director. By 1980, Reed was promoted to staff assistant and three years later, his dedication and diligence led the West Central board of directors to name him assistant manager.

When General Manager Fritz Jost succumbed to a massive heart attack while camping at Oahe Reservoir in 1985, it left West Central with a leadership void and, in its haste, the cooperative's board of directors elected to conduct a nationwide search for Jost's replacement. But, at least one member of that board thought their best alternative was already in the house.

"I was fairly new to the board and our older board members wanted to do a nationwide search for our new manager," said Joe Leutenegger, a former banker and Kadoka grocery store owner who, at 91, remains the oldest surviving board member of West Central Electric. "I knew then that he was here all-along and my thoughts were that Steve was the man for that job and we didn't have to go all over the country to find a new manager. He was sitting right in front of us."



Joe Leutenegger

Leutenegger, who would eventually serve 32 years on the West Central board, said that time and 40 years of observing Reed in his leadership role had proven his initial assessment correct.

“Early on, I recognized that Steve Reed was just a good old South Dakotan, personable and friendly, and he was there to help you,” Leutenegger said from his Mitchell home. “He was honest and trustworthy and you could take him at his word. He was just an all-round good person and he’d do anything in his power to help you.”

The only time Leutenegger said he ever questioned Reed’s judgment was when the new general manager asked Leutenegger to accompany him to a cooperative meeting in St. Louis.

“We got to town and we left the airport and there was a line of cabs and a line of people and there was this lonely old cab sitting across the street,” the former board member said, chuckling at the memory. “We jumped into the thing. I’m not sure the guy was licensed to drive a cab and I don’t think we hit less than 100 miles per hour. Every time we hit a bump, the glove compartment would slam open. I didn’t think Steve made a good choice relative to cabs, but we made it in one piece.”

Humor aside, Leutenegger contends that he was most impressed by Reed’s knowledge of the cooperative industry and his willingness to take the time to understand issues that challenged the cooperative over the years.

“I think Steve will be known as the best cooperative manager in South Dakota,” Leutenegger said. “From what I gather, many managers over the years would call him for advice and they had a lot of confidence in him. I think he did a great job. It was a lifetime of commitment, and for that, he’ll be remembered.”

‘Cocky little guy’

Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative CEO and General Manager Vic Simmons was fairly new to the cooperative business when he met Reed at a Rushmore managers’ meeting in the tiny Black Hills town of Nemo long ago.



Vic Simmons

Simmons said he was immediately impressed that Reed, younger than himself, was the manager of an electric cooperative.

Early on, I recognized that Steve Reed was just a good old South Dakotan, personable and friendly, and he was there to help you.

“It gave me confidence that, one day, I could be a manager,” Simmons recalled. “He was, and still is, a cocky little guy, but he knew what was going on then and he still does today.”

It was at that same Nemo meeting, hosted by then-manager Harvey Malone of Rushmore Electric, that Simmons first encountered Reed’s memorable sense of humor. And, the incident still sticks with him.

“Steve was single at the time and there wasn’t much nightlife in the small town of Nemo,” Simmons remembered. “So, Steve went into Rapid City for the evening. It was probably sun-up early the second day when Harvey ran into Steve and was surprised Steve was up so early. Steve’s response was, ‘Harvey, I’m just getting back from my night on the town.’”

Over the ensuing years, impressed by Reed’s management style and ability to keep West Central at the forefront of emerging technologies, Simmons said Reed was always the first person he’d turn to for advice on insurance and benefit plans for his own cooperative. And, Simmons lauded the veteran manager for developing a succession plan and mentoring those who would follow in his stead.

“Under Steve’s leadership, West Central has become a first-class cooperative. Steve’s legacy will be that of one of the longest serving co-op managers in the state,” Simmons said. “There are many cooperative employees who lasted 40 years, but only a handful of people who have been manager for 35 years.

“I wish my friend the best in retirement,” Simmons added. “May his drives be straight and long and his putts always find the cup.”

Advisor, mentor and friend

In 40 plus years of service to West Central Electric Cooperative, Steve Reed has played the role of advisor, mentor, counselor and friend to hundreds of employees and generations of members, in good times and in bad.

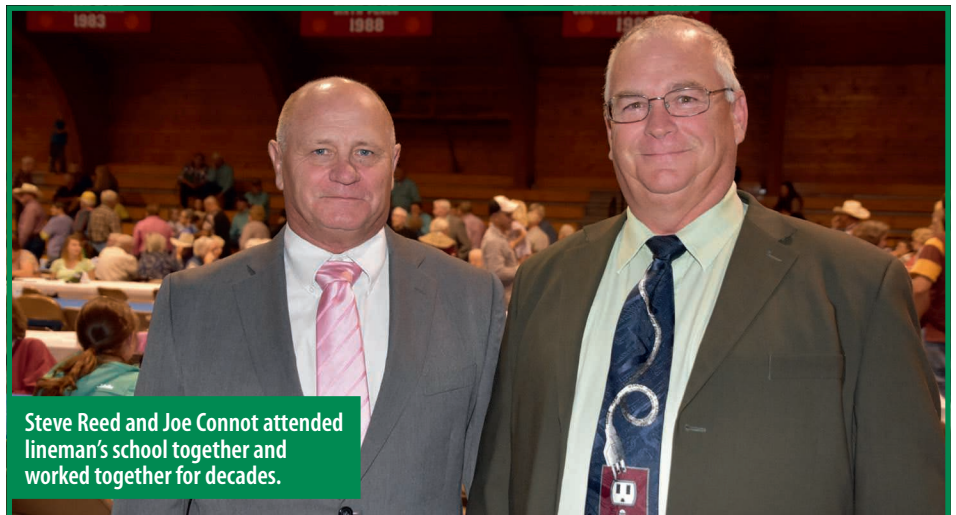
For the majority of Reed’s career at West Central, Joe Connot was just a few feet away – so close that each always knew what the other was doing. The two attended lineman’s school together in 1976-77, then reunited when Connot became West Central’s member services director in 1990.

For the next quarter-century, the pair worked just feet apart, separated by a glass partition in the wall of their offices.

“All those years, we were only separated by a pane of glass,” said Connot, who retired in 2017. “Not many people can say that. We both knew what each other was doing all those years. It was a mutual understanding, that we worked together and we always knew what the other was up to.”

Like any marriage, the relationship

continued on Page 10



Steve Reed and Joe Connot attended lineman’s school together and worked together for decades.



Patricia DeMers of Colome, S.D., takes part in activity demonstrating the mining and reclamation process.

TEACHERS HIT ENERGY CLASSROOMS

Annual Seminar Equips Educators with First-hand Experience

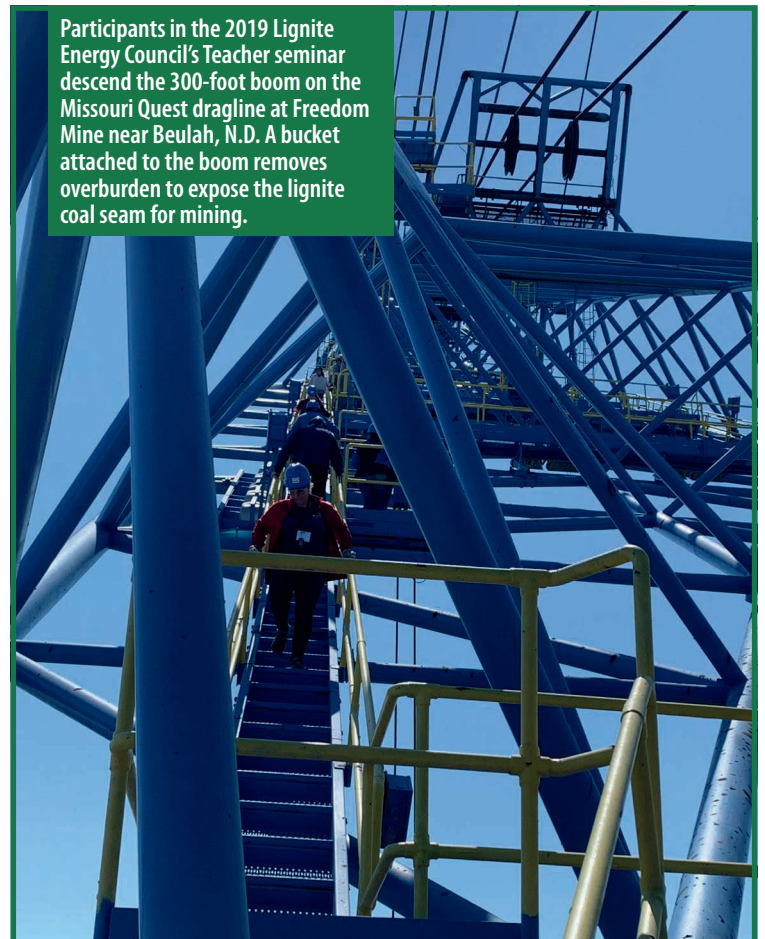
Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

When Craig Shryock’s vocational agriculture students at Wessington Springs High School return to the classroom this fall, they will eventually cover a section on electricity and Shryock can provide some first-hand lessons to his students thanks to a summer course he took.

Several years ago, Shryock was one of dozens of teachers to attend the Lignite Energy Council’s Teacher Seminar held each June since 1986. Since the first seminar was offered, more than 3,300 teachers have attended, giving each an insight into not only coal’s role in energy production, but also into electricity in general.

At a meeting of fellow ag teachers this summer, Shryock spoke about the seminar and its value.



Participants in the 2019 Lignite Energy Council’s Teacher seminar descend the 300-foot boom on the Missouri Quest dragline at Freedom Mine near Beulah, N.D. A bucket attached to the boom removes overburden to expose the lignite coal seam for mining.

“Being able to hold up that vial of coal and let the students see it is important,” Shryock said.

Having that tangible piece of coal to serve as a learning tool helps students understand that electricity is more than just flipping on a switch in the morning.

The piece of coal was just one take away that seminar attendees like Shryock benefit from. At the conclusion of the seminar, teachers take home handouts, videos, coal samples, and activities that can be used in the classroom, as well as two professional graduate credits.

The goal of the seminar is to provide teachers with the information and educational materials they need to teach their students about how lignite is mined and used to produce electricity for homes, farms and businesses in the Upper Midwest. In addition, the seminar covers lignite’s economic impact on the region, as well as important environmental issues affecting the lignite industry.

Educators attending the seminar are eligible to earn two professional development graduate credits from three North Dakota universities: North Dakota State University (teaching and learning),



Students in Craig Shryock’s vocational agriculture courses at Wessington Springs High School benefit lessons he learned at the Lignite Energy Council’s Teacher Seminar.

University of North Dakota (education), Minot State University (science).

All teachers and faculty are encouraged to apply for the seminar with preference given to fourth grade through 12th grade teachers, those with science, math or social studies as a primary subject matter and career counselors.

The seminar is a no-cost seminar for K-12 teachers in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana and Iowa, but they may incur travel expenses. Sponsorships may be available for transportation reimbursement to and from the seminar for eligible teachers in Montana, South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa. Those sponsorships will be arranged by the

utilities and cooperatives serving those states. Housing and most meals during the seminar are paid for as are graduate credit hours.

Handouts and classroom activities made available to the teachers go beyond lignite coal and lignite mining and reclamation. Teachers also dive into light bulb efficiencies and types, electricity transmission systems, energy use, carbon capture and storage, workforce issues, geology and environmental compliance.

For more information on the seminar, visit <https://lignite.com/events/teachers-seminar/> or contact the Lignite Energy Council at 701-258-7117.



Teachers get an up-close view of equipment used in the mining process at Coteau Properties’ Freedom Mine at Beulah, N.D.



Many a summer night will find Reed on the Murdo golf course.

Continued from Page 7

between Reed and Connot was not without contentious times. But, Connot says the two learned to work together to resolve issues and challenges faced by the cooperative over the years.

“We had disagreements, but we never argued,” Connot said. “If we did disagree, one of us would leave the office and have a cool-down time. Then we’d get back together and discuss the pros and cons of an idea. We honestly shared our thoughts, put them together, and more often than not, we’d come up with a good plan.”

Of all Reed’s attributes evident in their decades-long relationship, Connot said he was always most captivated with Reed’s commitment to the safety of his employees, including an accident-free record that reached a million man-hours and spanned some 13 years.

“You know, he wanted to make sure everybody went home at night and that he didn’t have to go to an employee’s house and tell their family why they didn’t come home,” Connot said. “It was always his biggest concern. He doesn’t come across as an emotional man, but he really is in his own way.”

Despite the challenges of severe winter storms that often plagued West Central, downing electric lines, snapping off poles for miles and leaving members without power, Connot said Reed engendered a sense of camaraderie in the cooperative’s staff that regularly led to long-term friendships and humorous times.

Such was the case one winter night when West Central conducted its annual Christmas party, a soiree that included a “white elephant” gift exchange and an unusual occurrence.

“So, we’re at the Buffalo Bar and this is when lottery tickets had first come out,” Connot recalled. “Steve scratched off his lottery ticket and he won like \$25,000. He couldn’t believe it.”

The entire West Central crew let Reed buy everyone a round of drinks before showing him the small print on the made-up lottery ticket which revealed that to collect his winnings, he had to do so from Santa Claus.

“Steve went from Cloud 9 to nine feet under the ground in a split-second,” Connot said, unable to suppress a laugh. “It was a helluva free-fall, let me tell you.”

In a lifetime of work, Connot said Reed always concentrated on new technologies that would help his staff perform their duties

more efficiently, save the co-op money, and better serve its members. When Basin Electric started a 24-hour dispatch center in Bismarck, Reed consulted with his team, talked about the advantages and eventually became one of the first cooperatives in South Dakota to establish its own dispatch center.

“That’s just one of the things that Steve did and a thing nobody else had ever thought about,” Connot said. “Most co-ops didn’t even have a main-frame computer when Steve was already introducing personal computers to the office. Sure, sometimes we stumbled a bit, but he always picked himself up and kept right on going.”

Even though he’s been out of the cooperative game for a couple of years, Connot said his relationship with Reed has carried into retirement.

“We still have coffee at least once a week, but we talk or text probably every day,” he said. “We’ve kept the relationship. We still talk to each other all the time. He was texting me at 8 o’clock this morning. After Steve retires, he claims he’ll stay in Murdo. But his wife has already warned me that he’ll drive her crazy. So, we’ll probably be drinking a lot more coffee in the future.”

Linemen’s perspective

Many of those front-line West Central workers who spent their days and sometimes their nights in the field, climbing poles and stretching overhead lines, felt they had found a kindred spirit in Reed. Some said they respected his no-nonsense approach to getting jobs done. Others knew that his experience, which included a couple of years performing the same duties they did day in and day out, gave him a better understanding of the challenges that awaited them in the field.

Dean Nelson started as a West Central apprentice lineman in Philip, then over the ensuing 40 years, worked his way up the cooperative ladder, first as a journeyman lineman then Line Superintendent and eventually Operations Manager. Nelson first met Reed when the latter joined the cooperative as a lineman.

“He was smart and always had a comeback. We became friends,” Nelson recalled. “After he became manager, I vented some of my frustrations to him and he said, ‘You’re the guy for me,’ and promoted me to line superintendent. I appreciated his confidence in me when he offered me advancement.”



Dean Nelson

The promotion brought on a whole new set of challenges for Nelson, but he said he was always impressed by Reed's commitment to quality and safety, and his devotion to coop members.

"When I was promoted, it was time to put up or shut up," said Nelson, who retired in 2015. "Steve and I had a lot of history together, and we worked so hard to bring West Central into the new century. In terms of safety, I was right there with him because no job's worth getting hurt at. We established a great accident-free record. When there are no serious accidents or injuries in your tenure, under your watch, it's what everyone in the electrical industry aspires to."

Beyond winter storms and downed lines, Nelson said he still looks back at some of the humorous happenings and memories during his four-decade tenure and smiles.

Justin Bryan spent 33 years as a lineman before retiring several years ago, then signing on for five years as summer help for West Central. Today, he sells minnows at Cedar Shore Resort near Oacoma, where his boat commands a slip and he slips out for fishing every chance he can.



Justin Bryan

Looking back at his career with the cooperative, Bryan remembers Reed as a "good boss" who never allowed his workers to take the easy route while sacrificing safety.

"Steve worked as a lineman so he knew what it took to makes things work out in the field," Bryan said recently between casts. "He drilled it into us about safety. It might take longer and there could be an easier way, but he knew it was most important that everyone went home healthy at night. Even after I retired, I still think, 'How can I do this the safest way?'"

Bryan said Reed would leave a legacy at West Central of a man who cared deeply about his employees and the cooperative's members.

"Steve Reed is driven and he doesn't mess around," he said. "You get to the point and get it done. You don't beat around the bush and he never did. He made decisions and moved on and lived with it. He was a company man and it was always company first."

Looking back

As he approaches retirement later this fall, the 61-year-old Reed remembers a litany of challenges, as well as a cadre of employees who worked together to develop strategies and solutions that would well-serve West Central.

In terms of its lifespan, he equates his electric coop to a 20-year-old who constantly reinvigorates himself to address the tests that come his way and counter the vagaries of a marketplace over which he has little control.

"It's still got to grow and has a ton of future ahead of it if it pays attention," he said. "If it doesn't pay attention, it will become an old man

and die. But it's not in its twilight yet. West Central still has a long way to go."

Reed has spent a lifetime working to improve West Central Electric, and he is quick to point out that his cooperative's best days may yet be just over the horizon. For instance, projects such as the Keystone XL Pipeline, on which he's worked for more than a decade, hold the prospect of tripling the cooperative's energy load as well as its revenues.

"The future is strong," he said. "Our challenge has always been population. But over the past 30 years, we've seen the advancement of technologies, solar and wind, and the challenge will be to see how they all fit together and how they are integrated into our system, and whether they benefit from one another."

And, as he walks out the door of his Murdo office for the last time, Reed will carry with him a lifetime of memories that range from a simple postcard he received from Midland's Richard Dowd years ago, congratulating him on being named general manager of his cooperative, to the woman who walked up to him at an annual meeting a couple of years ago and said she had attended his first annual meeting decades earlier and, after listening to his talk, agreed with her friends that he'd never last at West Central.

But he did last. And Reed said he hopes West Central Electric's valued members remember him fondly as a South Dakotan who dedicated the majority of his life to improving theirs.

"When I leave, I hope people remember me as someone who sought what was best for West Central Electric overall, and the long-term interests of our members," he said, a far-away look in his eyes transitioning into a smile. "And, I do know that when the wind starts howling like it did the other night, I'm not going to have my phone anywhere near me and I'm just going to roll over and go back to sleep."

Editor's Note: *This is the last 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.*



After a 40-year career spent dealing with aftermath of severe storms, Reed says that in retirement, "when the wind howls I will roll over and go back to sleep."

Trucking Along

Future Driver Shortage May Tap the Brakes

Brenda Kleinjan

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Our industry could be short just over 100,000 drivers in five years and 160,000 drivers in 2028.

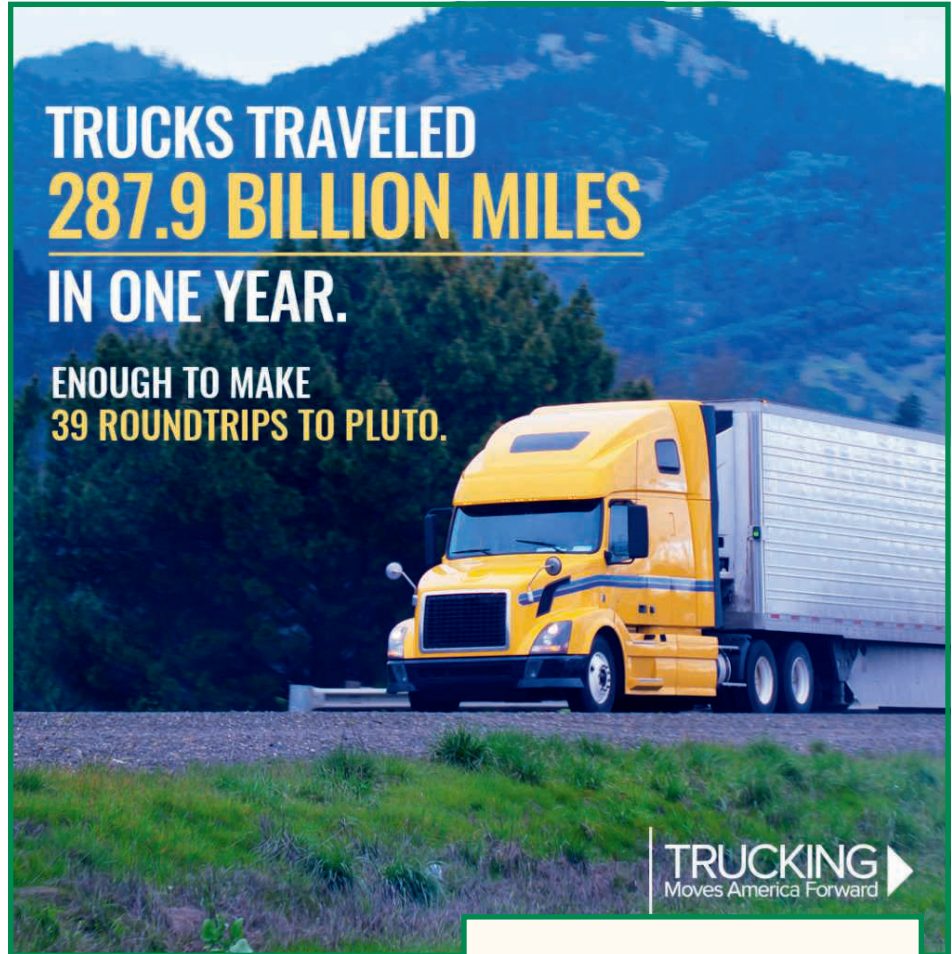
Travel down any major highway in the region and chances are you'll encounter dozens of semi trucks.

Some are hauling agriculture equipment or products, others may be hauling specialized loads such as wind turbine components. Yet others contain items destined for your local grocery store's shelves. Even your electric cooperative relies on timely deliveries of poles and materials hauled in by trucks.

There's no doubt about it, we're all connected by this nationwide trucking industry network.

This summer, the American Trucking Associations released its latest examination of the driver shortage, finding the industry needed 60,800 more drivers at the end of 2018 to meet the country's demands for freight services.

"Over the past 15 years, we've watched the shortage rise and fall with economic trends, but it ballooned last year to the highest level we've seen to date," said ATA Chief Economist Bob Costello. "The combination of a surging freight economy and carriers' need for qualified drivers could severely disrupt the supply chain.



The increase in the driver shortage should be a warning to carriers, shippers and policymakers because if conditions don't change substantively, our industry could be short just over 100,000 drivers in five years and 160,000 drivers in 2028."

The report details the factors that contribute to the shortage, including an aging driver population, increases in freight volumes and competition from other blue-collar careers. It also outlines potential market and policy solutions. While the report covers the entire trucking industry, the bulk of the shortage is in the over-the-road for-hire truckload market.

"The trucking industry needs to find ways to attract more and younger drivers," Costello said. "Right now, the average age of an over-the-road driver is

Sept. 8-14 is National Truck Driving Appreciation Week

National Truck Driver Appreciation Week is a week recognizing the 3.5 million professional truck drivers that are an important part of our economy. Every day these dedicated professional men and women transport goods and services safely, protected and on time, while keeping highways safe.



A semi travels along U.S. Highway 281 north of Plankinton, S.D.

46 years old, and almost as alarming is that the average age of a new driver being trained is 35 years old.

“Whether by removing barriers for younger drivers to begin careers as drivers, attracting more demographic diversity into the industry, or easing the transition for veterans, we need to do more to recruit and retain drivers,” he said. “That includes increasing pay, which happened at a brisk pace last year, to keep pace with demand, addressing lifestyle factors like getting drivers more time at home, and improving conditions on the job like reducing wait times at shipper facilities.”

In order to meet the nation’s freight demand, the report says the trucking industry will need to hire 1.1 million new drivers over the next decade – an average of 110,000 per year to replace retiring drivers and keep up with growth in the economy.

Myron Rau, president of the South Dakota Trucking Association in Sioux Falls, recently commented on the shortage in the *SDTA Trucking News*.

“It is probably not new news to anyone but it is reported that the U.S. trucker shortage is expected to double over the next decade. The driver deficit swelled by more than 10,000 to 60,800 in 2018 from a year earlier. The American Trucking Associations (ATA) estimates that 160,000 driver positions will go unfilled a decade from now. A possible solution has been proposed to regulators by the ATA. That solution is to lower the age for commercial drivers who can cross state lines by three years to 18. This proposal included increased training and supervision. Over 40 states now allow 18 year old drivers to get a commercial driver license to operate within the borders of their license issuing state. I believe there is a chance, if all parties come to the table, to implement this proposal that will bring some relief to predicted driver shortages,” Rau wrote.

The SDTA holds its annual convention Sept. 4-6 in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Facts About Trucking

- Professional truck drivers drove over 287.9 billion miles in 2016, more than double 25 years ago. Those miles accounted for 14.2 percent of all motor vehicle miles and 29.8 percent of all truck miles.
- The trucking industry paid \$41.8 billion in federal and state highway taxes in 2016, and represented 13.3 percent of vehicles on the road. The trucking industry paid \$17.6 billion in federal highway-user taxes and \$24.2 billion in state highway-user taxes in 2016.
- The trucking industry consumed 54.9 billion gallons of diesel fuel and gasoline in 2016. Based on consumption and price, ATA reported that motor carriers spent \$142.9 billion in 2015.
- The federal fuel tax for diesel in 2018 is 24.4 cents per gallon; the average state tax for diesel fuel was 25.2 cents per gallon.
- There are 3.68 million class 8 trucks on the road in the United States and 11.7 million commercial trailers were registered in 2016.
- There are 7.7 million truck drivers in the United States. Total industry employment is 3.5 million or one out of every 16 people working in the United States.
- There are 777,240 for-hire carriers and 700,591 private carriers in the United States; 97.3 percent of them have fewer than 20 trucks and 91 percent are operating six trucks or less.
- In 2016, the trucking industry hauled 10.77 billion tons of freight, or 70.1 percent of total U.S. freight tonnage. Rail was the next busiest mode, moving 13.8 percent of the nation’s freight tonnage.
- In 2017, the trucking industry was a \$700.18 billion industry, representing 79.3 percent of the nation’s freight bill.
- More than 80 percent of U.S. communities depend solely on trucking for delivery of their goods and commodities.

Source: *Professional Truck Drivers and The Trucking Industry*, October 2018



International Vinegar Museum volunteer Dick Snaza extols the virtues of seven types of vinegar available for sampling at the museum's tasting bar.

ALL THINGS VINEGAR

Roslyn Attraction Celebrates International Vinegars

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As county fair and state fair season rolls around, it's easy to think of prize-winning jars of pickles preserved in vinegar-based solutions.

But, there's so much more to the world of vinegar than the basic white vinegar or apple cider vinegar sold by the gallon in grocery stores.

And, the folks of Roslyn, S.D., want to tell you that story.

Enter the International Vinegar Museum located on the north edge of Roslyn's business district. Housed in a historic auditorium built by the community and Public Works Administration employees during the Depression, the museum seeks to inform and educate about vinegar.

Twenty years ago, Lawrence Diggs, also known as



The International Vinegar Museum is located in the Roslyn Auditorium, a building built by the Town of Roslyn and the Works Progress Administration in 1936.

The Vinegar Man, moved from California to Roslyn. Discussions soon began on ways to improve the quality of life and future of the towns of Roslyn and Eden. The museum opened in 1999 in the historic Roslyn Auditorium.

Once home to the Roslyn Vikings, the building's wood floors would become the foundation to showcase all things vinegar. Community volunteers oversee the museum's daily operations and provide tours to guests.

The first stop on entering the museum is a display explaining the process of making vinegar. According to eight yellow signs on the wall, one starts with a starch from either grains or root crops which becomes sugar by malting, molds, enzymes and hydrolysis. The sugar is converted to alcohol by yeast and then the alcohol is converted to vinegar by *Acetobacter Aceti*. The vinegar is then aged to improve flavor and mouth feel before finally being packaged and shipped. (The museum's own brand of balsamic vinegar is aged 18 years.)

The museum's north wall is lined with 200-plus different bottles of various vinegars from around the world. Explanatory panels describe different types of world vinegars. Fruit vinegars include wine vinegars

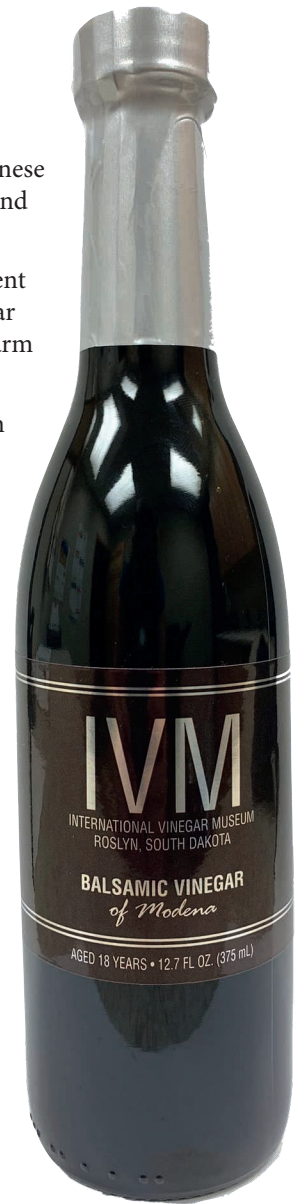
and cider vinegars, while grain vinegars include malt, corn and rice vinegars. The displays further explain differences between balsamic vinegar, Chinese vinegar, Japanese vinegar, Korean vinegar and vinegar uses in the Bible.

The displays also explain different health-related uses for vinegar as well as household and farm uses.

A corner of the museum features artwork made from vinegar, including paper made from vinegar. (The paper is formed from vinegar bacteria to produce a sheet of cellulose. The cellulose is pressed and dried to produce paper.)

From Memorial Day to Labor Day, the museum is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday-Saturday. During the rest of the year, it may be open by appointment by contacting museum volunteers. If you're planning adventures for 2020, be sure to mark the International Vinegar Festival down on your June calendar.

For more information on the museum, contact them at PO Box 201, Roslyn, SD 57261 or online at museum@internationalvinegarmuseum.com. They also have a Facebook page @internationalvinegarmuseum.



A corner of the museum features items for sale, including several varieties of vinegar as well as Roslyn community items. The museum has its own labeled balsamic vinegar for sale. (Pictured above, right.) The vinegar, which is aged 18 years, is a product of Italy and is bottled for the museum in North Dakota.

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

August 22

Tales on the River, Moose Club, 7 p.m, Free program, Speaker schedule at www.shortgrassarts.org, Fort Pierre, SD

August 21-25

Corn Palace Festival, Mitchell, SD, 605-995-8430

August 22-24

Senior Games, Watertown, Contact Andrew Magedanz at 605-949-0028

August 22-25

Prairie Village Annual Steam Threshing Jamboree, Madison, SD, 605-256-3644

August 22-25

Kool Deadwood Nites, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

August 22-25

Hugh Glass Rendezvous, Lemmon, SD, 605-393-5832

August 24-25

Great Dakota Wine Festival, Vermillion, SD, 605-624-4500

August 26-September 1

Mustang Rally, Sturgis, SD, 605-490-1663

August 29

South Dakota State Fair Value Added Ag Day, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. CDT, Huron, SD

August 29-September 2

South Dakota State Fair, Huron, SD, 605-353-7340

August 24-25: Fourth Annual Fall River Balloon Fest, 6 a.m., Airport, Hot Springs, SD, 605-745-4140



Photo courtesy: travelsouthdakota.com

August 30-September 2

Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Powwow, Fair and Rodeo, Eagle Butte, SD, 605-964-2447

August 30-September 1

Studebaker Car Show, Custer, SD, 605-673-2244

September 1

Mount Rushmore Rodeo at Palmer Gulch, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2525

September 6-7

Supermoto, Sturgis, SD, 605-720-0800

September 6-7

Ribs, Rods & Rock n' Roll, Vermillion, SD, 605-624-2021

September 7

Sidewalk Arts Festival, Sioux Falls, SD

September 7

Insect Festival at McCrory Gardens, Brookings, SD, 605-688-6707

September 7

Geothermal Greenhouse & High Tunnel Tours, Mission, SD, 605-430-4699, SDSPAmembers@gmail.com

September 7-8

Quilt Show, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2810

September 8

Homesteader Day Celebration, Valley Springs, SD, 605-367-4210

September 13

Organic Grains & Pumpkin Patch Agritourism Tours, Milbank, SD, 605-430-4699, SDSPAmembers@gmail.com

September 13-14

Deadwood Jam, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

September 13-15

Eighth Annual Dakota Western Heritage Festival, Fort Pierre, SD, 605-222-0079 or 605-280-8938

September 14-15

Stirling Family Memorial Ranch Rodeo, Fort Pierre, SD, 605-870-2472

September 19-21

St. Joseph's Indian School Powwow, Chamberlain, SD, 605-234-3452

September 21

AgriCulture on the Square, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. MDT, Free, Main Street Square, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-1722

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.