

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

## Mammoth Discovery

**Coal Miner Finds  
Mammoth Tusk**  
Pages 8-9

**A Golden Harvest**  
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# Electricity Provides Powerful Value



**Chris Larson,**  
General Manager

If you're like me, there are aspects of your life that become sort of a daily routine. I get ready for work, get in my car and drive to the convenient store on the way to the office. At lunchtime, I drive to the nearest fast-food location to get lunch. Once I finally end the day at home, I stream an episode or two of my favorite show before bed.

As we all look for ways to save money in this age of increasing inflation, I began to think about my daily routine and how much value it provided me compared to the money I spent. A morning pop and roll was costing me about \$6, a fast-food combo with a burger, fries and a drink was setting me back \$10, and my Netflix subscription is about \$16 each month. All these daily expenses totaled around \$85 a week, or about \$340 monthly. And what was the real value—short-term satisfaction and a larger waistline? Even as I started packing my own lunch, my pop was still costing me about \$120 a month. This got me thinking—is this the best value for my money?

The average daily cost of electricity is about \$5.15\*, and the average monthly electric bill for members of Clay-Union Electric is \$157\*. You could power your entire home every day for the price of 2 bottles of pop a day. I could drink water, cook my own meals, binge a series and run on a treadmill for less than the cost of that pop. Now to me, that's real value.

Electricity provides benefits that we often take for granted. It goes well beyond short-term satisfaction by allowing us to charge devices and have cold food and hot water, all in a comfortable indoor climate. Besides the privilege it affords, electricity has also remained relatively cost-stable even amidst rising inflation.

As a member-owned cooperative, Clay-Union Electric does everything in our power to ensure your costs stay reasonable and that

electricity remains a great value for our members. It's not always easy, as there are several factors beyond inflation that impact the price of electricity—some within our control but most beyond it.

The cost of electricity can fluctuate due to supply and demand, infrastructure investment, maintenance and operational expenses. Weather patterns also contribute, affecting both demand and generation capabilities, with extreme conditions leading to heightened energy use or disruptions. Government policies, such as subsidies for renewable energy or taxes and regulations on emissions, shape electricity costs as well. Your electric co-op considers all these aspects when adjusting rates, and because we're a cooperative, we consider the impact of those costs on our members as well.

As our community continues to rely on electricity for nearly everything in our homes, schools, hospitals and businesses, we need it to be reliable and affordable. You can be assured, we always put you top of mind and work each day to ensure electricity remains the best value for your money.

*\*Clay-Union Electric averages as of 11/30/2023*

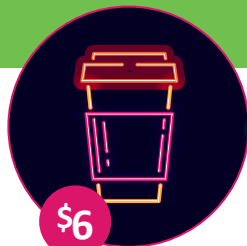
**Thank you again, for allowing us to provide your electric service needs.**

**Chris Larson**  
General Manager  
[clarson@clayunionelectric.coop](mailto:clarson@clayunionelectric.coop)

## Where Do You Find Value?

**Did you know the average daily cost of electricity is approximately \$5.15, or about \$157 per month?**

Electricity fuels our daily life essentials, from heating/cooling equipment to entertainment devices and appliances. Think of how vital power is compared to other everyday purchases. **That's real value.**



**Morning To-Go  
Drink/Roll**



**Fast-Food Combo Lunch**



**All-Day Power**

*Sources: Energy Information Administration, MoneyGeek and CNET*

## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

### CLAY-UNION ELECTRIC SPARKS

(USPS 116-800)

Office Hours  
Monday through Friday  
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
31321 SD Hwy. 19, Vermillion, S.D.

#### Board of Directors

Tom Larsen, President  
Christopher Kinney, Vice President  
Mike Slattery, Treasurer  
James Ryken, Secretary  
Asst. Secretary - Vacant

#### Staff

Chris Larson, General Manager  
Beth Bottolfson, Manager of Finance  
& Administration  
Mike Kruse, Operations Manager  
Lori Rueb, Senior Billing Coordinator  
Penny Ascherman,  
Member Services Specialist  
Jackie Williams,  
Marketing/Communications  
Electrician Foreman - Vacant  
Josh Anthofer, Electrician  
Alan Gauer, Crew Foreman  
Curt Johnson, Journeyman Lineman  
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Travis Wells, Journeyman Lineman  
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Jake Husby, Journeyman Lineman  
Clayton Sorensen, Apprentice Lineman

#### POWER FAILURE – 24-hour service In case of Power Failure Call: 1-800-696-2832 or 624-2673

CLAY-UNION ELECTRIC SPARKS is published monthly by Clay-Union Electric Corporation, P.O. Box 317, 1410 Cherry St., Vermillion, SD 57069. Periodicals Postage Paid at Vermillion, S.D., and additional offices. Clay-Union Electric members devote approximately 50 cents a month from their electric payments for a subscription to this publication. Subscriptions for non-members are available for \$12 annually.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Clay-Union Electric Sparks, PO Box 317, Vermillion, SD 57069;  
Telephone (605) 624-2673, 1-800-696-2832  
Fax (605) 624-5526.

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer*



## MIKE HAUCK RETIRES WITH 39 YEARS OF SERVICE

Friday, June 28th we said “see you around” to a well familiar smile that has appeared daily for 39 years at Clay-Union Electric. Mike’s official retirement date was July 15 but he wanted a 2 week vacation before officially retiring. Mike was hired by Clay-Union Electric on March 1, 1985 as a mechanic/equipment operator. In September of 1989 Mike began the apprentice lineman program and continued on to be promoted to journeyman lineman in April 1994.

With his continued knowledge of the position and leadership skills, Mike was promoted to lead lineman in November 2004.

While taking on the roles of lineman at Clay-Union Electric, Mike continued to perform most of our maintenance and repairing of equipment.

Thank you Mike for always being the jokester and also taking the lead when needed. We appreciate your years of dedicated service to Clay-Union Electric and it’s members. You will be missed!

#### YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIALS

	May 2024	Year To Date
Number of Consumers.....	3,553.....	3,542 Avg.
Total Revenue .....	\$543,722.....	\$3,502,492
Total Cost of Service.....	\$662,181.....	\$4,089,090
Operating Margins .....	\$(118,459).....	\$(586,598)
Other Margins.....	\$9,788 .....	\$66,729
Total Net Margins.....	\$(108,671).....	\$(519,869)
kWh Purchased.....	4,422,638 .....	35,974,002
Cost of Power .....	\$314,653 .....	\$2,165,549
kWh Sales.....	4,096,257 .....	34,150,898
Residential Average Usage .....	945 .....	1,339
Residential Average Monthly Bill.....	\$128 .....	\$157

# Extreme Heat Preparation

### Learn How to Stay Hydrated

You need to drink enough water to prevent heat illness. An average person needs to drink about 3/4 of a gallon of water daily. Everyone's needs may vary.

- You can check that you are getting enough water by noting your urine color. Dark yellow may indicate you are not drinking enough.
- Avoid sugary, caffeinated and alcoholic drinks.
- If you are sweating a lot, combine water with snacks or a sports drink to replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat.
- Talk to your doctor about how to prepare if you have a medical condition or are taking medicines.

### Make a Plan to Stay Cool

Do not rely only on electric fans during extreme heat. When temperatures are in the high 90s, fans may not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off.

- Spending a few hours each day in air conditioning can help prevent heat illness.
  - If you have air conditioning, be sure that it is in working order.
  - If you do not have air conditioning or if there is a power outage, find locations where you can stay cool. For example, a public library, shopping mall or a public cooling center. Plan how you will get there.
  - Additional resources may be available from local government or community groups.
- Make sure you have plenty of lightweight, loose clothing to wear.
- Create a support team of people you may assist and who can assist you. Check in with them often to make sure that everyone is safe.

### Learn Emergency Skills

- Learn how to recognize and respond to heat illness.
- Learn First Aid and CPR.
- Be ready to live without power. Utilities may be offline. Be ready to live without power, gas and water. Plan for your electrical needs, including cell phones and medical equipment. Talk to your doctor. Plan for backup power.

### Gather Emergency Supplies

- Gather food, water and medicine. Stores might be closed. Organize supplies into a Go-Kit and a Stay-at-Home

Kit. In the event of a power outage, you may lose access to clean drinking water. Set aside at least one gallon of drinking water per person per day. Consider adding drinks with electrolytes. Include sunscreen and wide-brimmed hats.

- Go-Kit: at least three days of supplies that you can carry with you. Include backup batteries and chargers for your devices (cell phone, CPAP, wheelchair, etc.)
- Stay-at-Home Kit: at least two weeks of supplies.
- Have a one-month supply of medication in a child-proof container and medical supplies or equipment.
- Keep personal, financial and medical records safe and easy to access (hard copies or securely backed up)
- Consider keeping a list of your medications and dosages on a small card to carry with you.

*Source: American Red Cross*



### Power Line Safety "Call 911 and Don't Get Out"

#### Hobie Klein, Age 12

Hobie Klein warns farmers to call 911 and don't get out of the tractor if contact is made with a power line. Hobie's parents are Dean and Karey Klein, members of Sioux Valley Energy.

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.

# Summer SALADS

## MOM'S VEGETABLE SALAD

### Ingredients:

#### Salad

2 cans diced carrots  
1 can green beans  
1 can yellow beans  
1 small can peas  
1 can cut baby corn

*Drain all the vegetables*

#### Add

1/2 cup diced green pepper  
1 cup diced celery  
1 diced medium onion

#### Dressing

Combine in a saucepan  
1/2 cup oil  
1 1/3 cup sugar  
1/3 cup white vinegar  
1/3 cup cider vinegar  
2 Tbsp water

*Combine in a saucepan  
and boil until clear*

### Method

Pour dressing over vegetables and refrigerate for several hours before serving. Keeps for a week.

Debra Clow  
Harrisburg, S.D.

## FRESH SUMMER SALAD

### Ingredients:

3 tbsps. olive oil, divided  
1 tbsp. lime juice  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1 1/5 cups fresh corn or  
thawed frozen corn  
1 1/2 cups cherry tomatoes,  
halved  
1/2 cup cucumber, finely  
chopped  
2 tbsp. fresh basil, minced  
1/3 cup crumbled Feta  
cheese or Parmesan  
cheese  
1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar or  
Italian salad dressing

### Method

Mix 2 tablespoons of oil, lime juice and salt in a small bowl. Cook corn in a skillet with remaining 1 tbsp. oil. Pour corn into bowl, cool slightly. Add tomatoes, cucumber and basil. Refrigerate. Before serving, drizzle with dressing, cheese and balsamic vinegar or Italian dressing.

Barb Selland  
Mitchell, S.D.

## CHICKEN SALAD

### Ingredients:

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

### Method

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

McCormick.com

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.



## August 8-10, 2024

Brought to you by:



### Thursday, August 8

- 10:30 am 4-H Companion Animal Show
- 12 pm 4-H Poultry Show
- 12-10 pm Inflatables
- 1-3 pm Joe Sokolowski Performs
- 1-3 pm 4-H Ambassador Petting Zoo
- 1-7 pm Honey Bee Demonstration
- 1-8 pm Vendor Booths Open
- 3-11 pm Beer Garden Tent
- 4-6 pm Horse Rides
- 5 pm Free Community BBQ
- 5 pm 4-H Swine Show
- 5-7 pm Local Fare at the Fair  
hosted by Farmers Market
- 5-7 pm Fire Department Demonstration
- 5-9 pm Jetley Park Performs
- 7 pm Raise 'em Rank Bull Riding

**Bull Riding**  
\$20  
12 and up



For a complete schedule and more information about events, please visit [www.claycountyfair.net](http://www.claycountyfair.net)



### Friday, August 9

- 8:30 am 4-H Sheep & Goat Show
- 11-1 pm Elaine Peacock Band Performs
- 11-6 pm Ag Day
- 11-6 pm Clay-Union Electric Member & Community Appreciation Day**
- 12-10 pm Inflatables
- 1-7 pm Honey Bee Demonstration
- 1-8 pm Vendor Booths Open
- 2 pm 4-H Rabbit Show
- 3 pm Animal Costume Contest
- 3-12 am Beer Garden Tent
- 4:30 pm Barnyard Olympics
- 5 pm Ice Cream Social
- 7 pm ATV Mud Drags
- 8-12 am Free Street Dance featuring Leila's Rose

**Mud Drag Admission**  
\$5 12 and up

### Saturday, August 10

- 9 am 4-H Beef Show
- 10 am Cornhole Tournament
- 10 am Kids Pedal Pull
- 10-6 am Vendor Booths Open
- 10-10 pm Inflatables
- 11-12 pm Open Class Pie Entry
- 11-3 pm Car, Truck & Tractor Show
- 12 pm 4-H Round Robin Contest
- 12-2 pm Bluff Ridge Performs
- 12-7 pm Beer Garden Tent
- 1:30 pm 4-H Buddy Show
- 3 pm 4-H Fashion Revue
- 3-4 pm Salsa Competition
- 3-6 pm Craft Beer Sampling with Ben's Brewing & XIX Brewing
- 4 pm Pie Auction
- 4 pm Chasing the 4 of Clubs Finale
- 5 pm Arena Gates Open
- 7 pm Demolition Derby

**Derby Admission**  
Adults \$15  
Kids \$10



Basin Bus Tour 2024, Bon Homme Electric, Clay-Union Electric and Union County Electric members and personnel just outside the Antelope Valley Station.

## EDUCATING MEMBERS

### Learning the logistics of how their power is produced and supplied to their cooperative

**Jackie Williams**

[jwilliams@clayunionelectric.coop](mailto:jwilliams@clayunionelectric.coop)

The first week of June, 32 members from B-Y, Clay-Union and Union County Electric Cooperatives all joined together for a trip to Beulah ND to learn the process of what it takes to generate electricity to their homes and businesses.

The first stop was in Madison to visit East River Electric, the coops generation and transmission cooperative (that's who the coop buys the electricity from). There they were met by Bob Sahr, CEO and Chris Studer, Chief Member and Public Relations Officer, and his staff to discuss their portion of the operations to supply electricity to the coops in our region.

We then traveled on to Bismarck, ND with stops in Huron for lunch before resting for the evening.

With a busy schedule we were up and ready to hit the road to Beulah for our first tour at 9:30 a.m. at the Great Plains Synfuel Plant.

Erin and her student intern had some very interesting information to tell us and show us with a complete indoor model of how coal can be refined into natural gas and a variety of other products. If you ever think a model car or truck was hard to piece together, you should join us to see the model of an entire synfuel plant.

Our next stop of the tour took us just up the road a ways to the Antelope Valley Station, where we enjoyed lunch provided by a local market before Lindsey gave a very detailed presentation of the control room, boilers, and turbine overview from the model room. Due to maintenance we were not allowed a walking tour of the plant unfortunately, but I'm sure there were members that didn't mind not having to put on the hard hats or the 100+ degrees inside the plant.

Our final tour of the day was a bus ride through the Coteau Properties Company Freedom Mine where our guide Cheri explained the procedures of how lignite coal is produced from the surface and how the land is returned to its original state. The site and size of the earthmoving equipment brought many Ahhhs from the members.

Our return ride took us through Pierre where we had lunch and a meet and greet with South Dakota Rural Electric Associations CEO Steve Barnett and staff, and Public Utilities Commissioner Chris Nelson.

The Basin Bus Tour is brought to our members on a biyearly trip and is free to the members of Clay-Union Electric. Providing you with safe, reliable and affordable electricity now and into the future is our mission.



*Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey*

# Mammoth Discovery

**Shannon Marvel**

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

Over Memorial Day of 2023, a coal miner made a historic discovery at the Freedom Mine in North Dakota.

“The shovel operator just happened to take a scoop that had a complete mammoth tusk,” said Jeff Person, a paleontologist with the North Dakota Geological Survey.

“The tusk was about seven-foot-long. That shovel must’ve picked it up just perfectly to not damage or break it. The driver reported the find to his superiors at the Freedom Mine, who then contacted us,” Person said.

The tusk was found in an old streambed. Other fossils



*Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey*

were found in the streambed, including “more than twenty bones from the skeleton, including ribs, a shoulder blade a tooth and parts of the hips,” according to a news release.

“Most of the mammoth fossils known from North Dakota are isolated bones and teeth,” stated Clint Boyd, Senior Paleontologist for the North Dakota Geological Survey, in the news release. “This specimen is one of the most complete mammoth skeletons discovered in North Dakota, making it an exciting and scientifically important discovery.”

The bones were sent off to the Paleontology Lab at the North Dakota Heritage Center and State Museum in Bismarck to undergo extensive cleaning before being prepped to be dried out, which requires that the bones be

wrapped in plastic.

It could take up to another year for the bones to be dried out enough to be taken out of the plastic wrap, Person said.

At that point, the bones will be the focus of scientific research, he said.

According to the news release, “mammoths lived in North Dakota during the Pleistocene Epoch, commonly called the Ice Age, and went extinct in this area around 10,000 years ago. Several species of mammoth lived in North America, including the Woolly Mammoth and the Columbian Mammoth. They lived alongside other iconic animals like saber-toothed tigers and giant sloths. Once the bones are fully cleaned, paleontologists will be able to identify which species was collected from the mine.”



*Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey*

# YOUR CO-OP NEWS

## Clay-Union Electric Corporation Board Meeting Summary

MAY 24, 2024 • VERMILLION, SOUTH DAKOTA

The board meeting was called to order on May 24, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. by board President Tom Larsen. The meeting was held in the conference room at the Clay-Union Electric Headquarters.

In attendance were Tom Larsen, Jim Ryken, Chris Kinney, and Mike Slattery. District #1 seat vacant. Attending staff members included Chris Larson, Beth Bottolfson, and Jackie Williams.

**Agenda (ACTION ITEM)** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the agenda.

**Visitors to Be Heard** – None

**Approval of Minutes from the April Board Meeting (ACTION ITEM)** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the 4/26/24 board minutes.

**Approval of Minutes from the April Executive Session (ACTION ITEM)** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the 4/26/24 executive session.

**Check List & Electronic Funds Transfer** – The board reviewed the EFT/ACH payments and the monthly check list as presented.

**New Members and Refunds (ACTION ITEM)** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve new members, refunds and credit deposits as presented.

**Early Retirement of Capital Credits** – None

**Contracts** – None

**Policy Review** – None

**Work Order and Special Equipment Summary** – None

**Management Reports:**

**A. Manager's Report** - Manager Larson provided reports on the monthly activities:

**June Board Meeting** - The date of July 3, 2024, was set as the next regular board meeting to begin at 8:30 a.m.

**East River REED/MAC** - The REED/MAC meeting was held May 1st in Madison.

**New Building** – Manager Larson reviewed the activities and warranty work that was completed during the last month.

**Cherry St. property** – Manager Larson reported on the steps he was going through to close on the Cherry St. properties.

**Distributed Generation Discussion** – Manager Larson continues to work through the needed agreements with East River staff and has contacted the member for an update of his project.

**Clay County Fair** - We will be doing our member/community event at the fair again this year on August 9th.

**Southeast Managers** – The managers met on May 10th at Southeastern's Sioux Falls office.

**East River Caucus for Basin Director (Action)** - A motion was made, seconded, and approved to nominate Jim Ryken as the delegate to vote for the Basin director election to be held on June 6th @ 9:30 a.m. at the East River's Headquarters in Madison.

**District 17 Candidate Forum** - On May 7th Manager Larson moderated the district 17 candidate forum that was put on by the Governmental Affairs committee of the VCDC.

**Renewable Energy Credits** - We received a check for some wind recs from 2021 in the amount of \$9,065.25.

**Marketing and Communications Committee Meeting** – The

committee met on May 23rd in Madison.

**CFC Forum** - The CFC Annual meeting is June 17th in Indianapolis, Indiana during the CFC Forum.

**Heikes Annexation (Action)** – A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the agreement to finalize the transfer of service rights and agree on the amount for the equipment the City of Vermillion would like to keep.

**B. Administrative Report** – Manager of Finance and Administration Bottolfson reviewed the following reports with the board:

- Billing, Collections and Customer Service
- Irrigation Season
- 2023 Margins to Allocate
- East River Electric Capital Credit Retirement
- Cost of Service Study

*All reports were posted to the website earlier for board review.*

**C. Operations Report** – General Manager Larson reviewed the following reports with the board:

- Monthly department work summary
- Wiring Crew
- New Services
- Service Upgrades
- April Outage Report

*All reports were posted to the website earlier for board review.*

**Financial Report** – Manager of Finance and Administration Bottolfson reviewed the following reports with the board:

- Balance Sheet
- Interest Income
- kWh Sales Report
- Large Power
- Line Loss
- Operating Statement
- Power Bill
- Summary of Purchased Power
- Wiring Income & Expense

*All reports were posted to the website earlier for board review.*

**Legal Report** – None

**Strategic Planning** – None

**Safety Meeting Minutes** – The May Safety Meeting report was posted to the website for the board to review and was discussed during the meeting.

**Cyber Security** – The April Cyber Security report from East River IT was posted to the website for the board to review and was discussed during the meeting.

**Video and/or Meeting Reports** –

- East River Report
- East River Financials
- Basin Reports

**Executive Session** – The board went into Executive Session at 1:10 p.m., Executive Session was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. There was no action taken.

**Calendar** – The board reviewed the June 2024 calendar.

**Adjournment** – There being no further business, a motion was made, seconded, and carried, to adjourn the meeting at 2:31 p.m.

**Thomas Larsen, President**

**James Ryken, Secretary**

*Clay-Union Electric*  
*Member/Community Appreciation Day*  
*Friday, August 9th • 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.*  
*Clay County Fair Grounds*

- Safety Demos
- Dunk a lineman
- Bucket Rides
- Hours: 11am-Noon, 1-2pm, 3-5pm
- Register for door prizes
- Pick up your voucher\*  
for the concession stand

(vouchers only available at our booth, voucher good for Friday or Saturday)

(\*One voucher per person, all proceeds go to the Clay Co. Fair)



## Sioux Empire Fair - Agriculture Appreciation Day

Join Clay-Union Electric and other Touchstone Energy Cooperatives at the Sioux Empire Fair for Agriculture Appreciation Day on **Wednesday, August 7, 2024!**

The 41st annual Ag Appreciation Day, hosted by the Greater Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by Touchstone Energy Cooperatives will be held Wednesday, August 7, at the W.H. Lyon



Fairgrounds. A complimentary lunch (pork sandwiches, chips and a drink) will be served from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Entertainment includes live music from Mogen's Heroes.

Admission to the Sioux Empire Fair is free until 1:00 p.m. courtesy of Touchstone Energy Cooperatives. *No ticket required for the free lunch.*

## Outage Reports

Date	Time	Township	Members	Cause
6/3	1:30 a.m.	Gayville	1	Tripped Breaker
6/6	8:30 a.m.	Bethel	12	Contractor
6/7	2:00 p.m.	Brule	68	Contractor
6/12	3:52 p.m.	Garfield	2	Unknown
6/24	12:00 a.m.	Fairview	64	Flood
6/24	6:00 a.m.	Spirit Mound	51	Flood
6/24	8:45 p.m.	Garfield	7	Equip. Failure
6/26	2:35 p.m.	Gayville	1	Blown Fuse
6/29	9:00 a.m.	Gayville	3	Equip. Failure
6/29	2:00 a.m.	Gayville	5	Member Caused

## Office Hours and Due Dates

Our office hours are Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please remember your PAYMENT DUE DATE is the 20TH OF EACH MONTH. Your payment must ARRIVE in our office on the 20th to avoid any penalties. Please allow mailing time as we go by the received date, NOT the postmark. If the 20th falls on a weekend or holiday, payment is due the following business day. If payment is still not received within 10 days by 8 a.m., a \$25 collection fee will be applied and a final disconnect notice will be mailed. If disconnection for nonpayment occurs, all past and current energy charges, a reconnect fee and sufficient credit deposit will be required before the meter can be reinstalled.

### FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, WE ALSO ACCEPT THESE PAYMENT OPTIONS.



**Bank Draft** – Have your payment automatically deducted from your checking or savings account. No fees apply for this service.

### Recurring Debit/Credit Card

– You may call in your credit/debit card payment and ask for recurring, it will then bill to that card every month on the 20th (or next business day) of each month until you call to cancel. No fees apply for this service.

**Pay by Phone** – You may call in your credit/debit card payment each month. No fees apply for this service.

**By Mail** – Send check or money order with your payment slip. Please be sure to mail early so we receive it by the 20th, we do not go by postage date.

**In Office** – We accept cash, check and money order or we can take your credit/debit card in our office. No fees apply for this service.

**On Line Billing** – Pay your bill on line at [www.clayunionelectric.coop](http://www.clayunionelectric.coop) No fees apply for this service.

Collection Fee .....	\$25
Standard Reconnect Fee .....	\$50
Reconnect Fee for Non-Payment.....	\$100
After Hours Reconnect Fee.....	\$150
Insufficient Funds Check Fee .....	\$30

**Delinquent Accounts (gross rate)**  
**10 percent on the first \$200 plus 2 percent on the balance.**

# A GOLDEN HARVEST

## The Buzz Behind Adee Honey Farms

**Frank Turner**

[frank.turner@sdrea.coop](mailto:frank.turner@sdrea.coop)

Three generations ago, the Adee family learned that a tumultuous time can lead to significant opportunity. During the 1930s, the Great Depression wreaked havoc on small rural communities and the agricultural industry. The value of crops and livestock plummeted, and the land became arid.

These hard times impacted many in the Midwest, including Vernon Adee, a rural teacher and rancher in Nebraska. Vernon needed a new way to provide for his family, and a letter from his brother held the answer: “I can’t sell chickens or hogs, but I’m doing well with honey. Be advised: Get a beehive.”

Following his brother’s advice, Vernon attended a foreclosure auction and purchased his first beehive. The decision to begin

beekeeping would inspire several more generations of the Adee family to continue in the trade.

Wanting to start their own operation, Vernon’s sons, Richard and Stanley, purchased a retiring beekeeper’s business through a trade magazine advertisement in 1957. Located in Bruce, South Dakota, the business included 1,500 hives and a breeding yard in Woodville, Mississippi. The acquisition marked the beginning of Adee Honey Farms, and what began as a small family farm quickly grew into the largest beekeeping operation in the country. Today, Adee Honey Farms supports more than 80,000 colonies and nearly 70 full-time employees.

“It started with survival and eventually became a family business,” said Bret Adee, Vernon’s grandson and the owner-operator of Adee Honey Farms. “I can remember being four or five years old and being in the field with my dad, holding the smoker and helping where I could. By the time I was in elementary school, I was loading trucks and moving boxes in the warehouse. Like anyone who grew up on a farm, I was involved in the family business by the time I could walk.”

From a young age, Bret has held a deep love and appreciation for the honey bee. The insect’s ability to cooperate and produce golden treasure while benefiting plants, crops, and the ecosystem at large makes them a unique livestock, unlike any other.

“To watch a hive grow and forage, and by the end of the summer make up to 150 pounds of honey – it’s just so exciting,”

said Bret. “It’s the dynamics of the biology that keeps it interesting.”

Right now, Adee Honey Farms is engaged in honey production in the Midwest, with their bees spread across South Dakota and the west edge of Minnesota and the south edge of North Dakota. Around the first week of August, Bret’s business will start the honey harvest, an event that can last until the first frost or even longer. For now, Bret said this year is shaping up to be a good season for honey production.

“It’s early, but I’m optimistic. The years when there is a lot of clover are the years that beekeepers do well,” said Bret. “We had a wet enough fall that enough clover germinated. We can always lose that to a hot dry wind... but we are optimistic right now.”

But bees aren’t just used to make honey; they also have hand in pollinating crops across the country. More than a neat fact, it’s also the second half of the beekeeping industry. The mere presence of honey bees can increase yields for crops such as alfalfa and sunflowers by up to 20 to 30 percent, depending on the variety of crop. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, pollination is responsible for more than \$18 billion in added revenue to crop production in the country.

Once the honey harvest is over, the bees will be loaded onto a truck to tour the country, traveling from the Dakotas to California and later to Texas in search of favorable weather and crops to pollinate. In fact, crop yields from California almond trees and apple trees are almost totally dependent on pollination from bees, enticing farmers from across the country to welcome

bees onto their land. Everyone benefits – even bees.

“It’s a win for the consumer who gets to eat the honey. It’s a win for the landowner who has the bees on his land, and if everything goes right, it’s good for the beekeeper’s family too,” said Bret.



Bret Adee, owner-operator of Adee Honey Farms, is a third-generation beekeeper in the Adee family. Photos courtesy of Adee Honey Farms.





*Photos Courtesy of Karli Hinds*

# Food Trucks

## How Karli Hinds Jumped Into the Business

**Shannon Marvel**

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

Karli Hinds was working a typical corporate 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. job when she realized she wanted a life where she had the flexibility to travel with her husband.

“So I had actually quit my job and stayed home for six months or so,” Hinds said. “Then I wanted something I could do but still have the flexibility to travel.”

Hinds had a couple ideas, one that had to do with the fact that she’s a “foodie.”

“I started cooking really young. I would say I was making meals by myself when I was in middle school,” she said.

The idea for opening a food truck was at the forefront of her mind, given that she was not interested in having a storefront.

“I didn’t want the hassle and responsibility of it. I wanted a business I could rely on myself and not have to rely on several employees,” Hinds said.



**“On my second day in the food truck, I was serving Tex Mex, and I had a crazy line. It was just insane. I wanted to quit right then, but I also was thinking, ‘this is going to work.’ It was a good turnout, and it was only my second day.”**

**- Karli Hinds**

Financially, there are pros and cons to starting up a food truck business.

Hinds said there’s limited finance options for food trucks while at the same time, there’s more cash that you must have on hand to get started.

Finding a food truck or trailer was the next challenge and proved to be fairly difficult for Hinds at first.

“We wanted one that was brand new,” Hinds said. “Most of the manufacturers are out of Mexico, and they don’t always have the best reputations. We really struggled with finding a reputable company to build a trailer with me. Somehow, we found a random post on Facebook from a guy that was selling brand new food trailers somewhere in the middle of nowhere in Iowa.”

Hinds and her husband walked through the trailers and picked out what they liked and didn’t like before finally deciding on the one to get.

Hinds uses the food truck to cook up an array of menu items every week.

“I’m actually a really picky eater, believe it or not,” Hinds said. “I didn’t want to specialize in one thing. People in small towns know we get kind of burnt out from eating the same thing over and over.”

Hinds rotates between eight or so different food themes.

“Once in a while I come

up with something new to add within that theme,” Hinds said. “My best seller is always my smash burgers.”

She’ll find her recipes on the popular social media app, Tik Toc.

On her second day of business, Hinds knew her food truck business would be sustainable.

“On my second day in the food truck, I was serving Tex Mex, and I had a crazy line,” Hinds said. It was just insane. I wanted to quit right then, but I also was thinking, ‘this is going to work.’ It was a good turnout, and it was only my second day.”

Hinds said the job isn’t always fun and is physically demanding.

“The hours are a lot more chaotic,” she said. “The problem-solving aspect is better as I don’t have a chain of command that I need to go through to make things right with the customer.”

During the winter months, Hinds delivers lunches a couple days out of the week.

“It’s just one item and I deliver them in town within Vermillion,” Hinds said. “That’s just something that I do that’s a little bit different than other food trucks.”



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**AUG. 2-11**  
**Sturgis Motorcycle Rally**  
Sturgis, SD  
[www.sturgismotorcyclerrally.com](http://www.sturgismotorcyclerrally.com)

**AUG. 3**  
**Prairie Fest**  
Armour, SD

**AUG. 2-4**  
**Arlington Days**  
Arlington, SD  
605-690-5717  
Follow Arlington Days, South Dakota on Facebook & Instagram

**AUG. 3**  
**Bloomin' Quilt Party**  
12-5 p.m.  
Bennett Barn  
Aurora, SD  
605-690-3246

**AUG. 6-8**  
**IDEAg's Farmfest**  
8 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Redwood County, MN  
651-316-4369

**AUG. 8**  
**Raise'em Rank Bull Riding**  
7 p.m.  
Clay County Fairgrounds  
Vermillion, SD  
[www.claycountyfair.net/schedule](http://www.claycountyfair.net/schedule)

**AUG. 9**  
**Clay-Union Member/Community Appreciation Day**  
Clay County Fair  
Sponsor of the Day  
Clay County Fairgrounds  
Vermillion, SD

**AUG. 9**  
**ATV Mud Drags**  
7 p.m.  
Clay County Fair  
Clay County Fairgrounds  
Vermillion, SD

**AUG. 10**  
**Dakota Classic Cruisers Car, Truck, and Tractor Show & Shine**  
11 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Clay County Fair  
Clay County Fairgrounds  
Vermillion, SD

**AUG. 10**  
**Demolition Derby**  
7 p.m.  
Clay County Fair  
Clay County Fairgrounds  
Vermillion, SD

**AUG. 10-11**  
**Fur Trader Days**  
Geddes, SD  
605-680-2160

**AUG. 17**  
**Yankton Extreme Bull Riding Tour**  
7 p.m.  
Yankton, SD  
605-760-2153

**AUG. 28 - SEPT. 2**  
**South Dakota State Fair**  
7 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
State Fairgrounds  
Huron, SD  
[www.SDStateFair.com](http://www.SDStateFair.com)

**SEPT. 8**  
**Homesteader Day**  
1-4 p.m.  
Beaver Creek Nature Area  
Valley Springs, SD

**SEPT. 14-15**  
**2024 Kuchen & Harvest Festival**  
Delmont, SD

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.

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