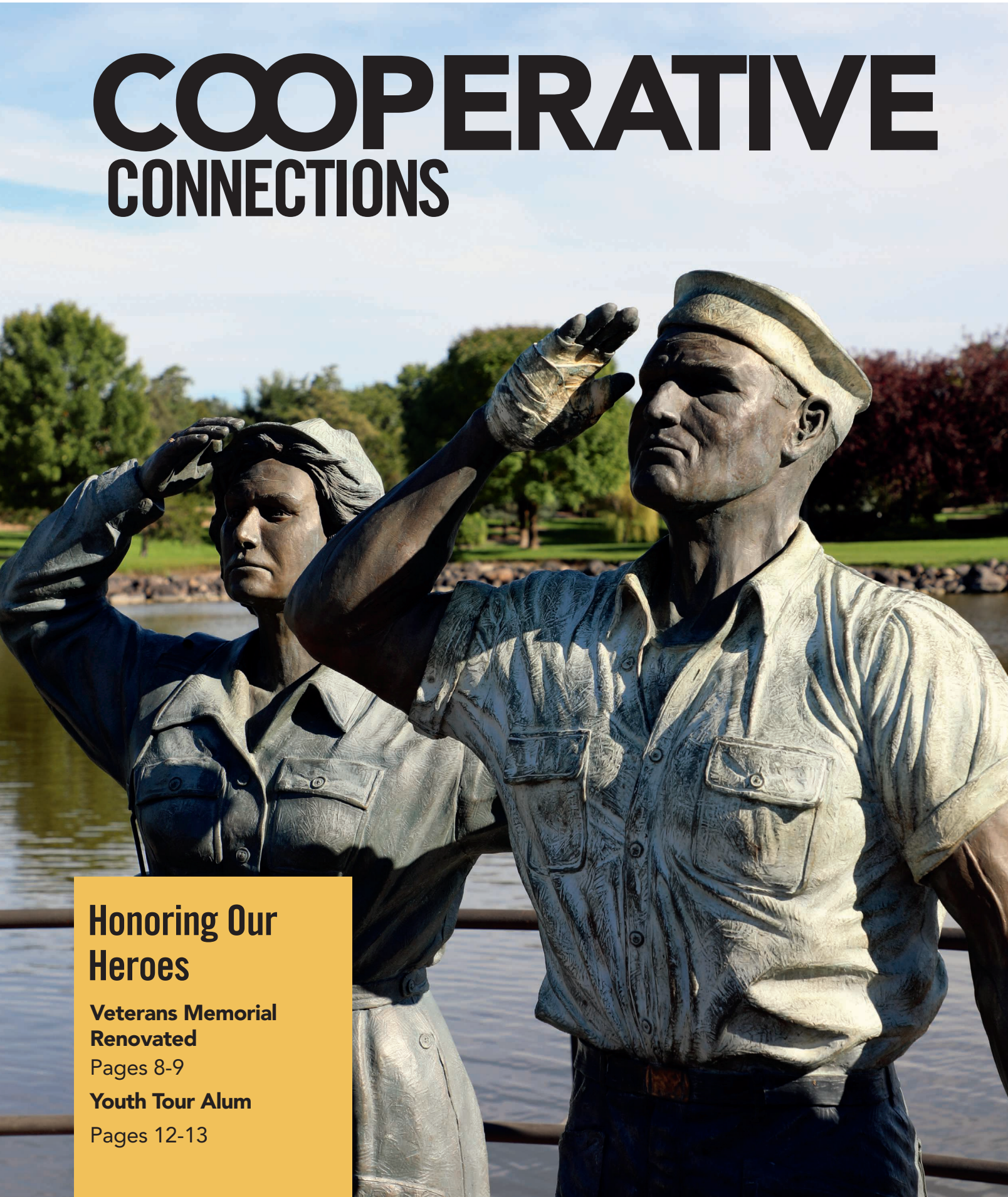
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

CLAY-UNION ELECTRIC SPARKS
NOVEMBER 2026 VOL. 66 NO. 10

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Honoring Our Heroes

Veterans Memorial Renovated

Pages 8-9

Youth Tour Alum

Pages 12-13

Rising Power Costs Continue in 2027



Steve Tilton, General Manager

As we look ahead to 2027, I want to take a few minutes to talk with you about something that affects all of us: the cost of electricity.

We understand that any increase in expenses matters to our member-owners. Families are managing household budgets, farmers are dealing with higher input costs, and businesses and organizations are working to control expenses. We see those challenges, and we experience many of them ourselves here at Clay-Union Electric Cooperative.

As your cooperative, we take seriously our responsibility to manage your resources wisely and provide reliable electric service at the lowest reasonable cost.

One of the biggest challenges we are facing is the increasing cost of the power we purchase.

In 2025, Basin Electric Power Cooperative—the power supplier owned by its member electric cooperatives—told the membership that significant investments would be necessary to meet growing demand for electricity, respond to changing requirements from the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), and improve our existing generation fleet. The total investment is expected to be nearly $9 billion over the next few years.

Electricity is something we all depend on every day.

Our job is to make sure it is there when you need it, today and for genterations to come.

At Basin Electric's 2025 annual meeting, we learned that these investments and requirements would result in a nearly 20% increase in the cost of wholesale power. The member cooperatives worked together to have Basin Electric spread that increase over two years rather than taking the full impact at once.

Clay-Union members saw the first portion of that increase beginning in January 2026 with a Clay-Union rate adjustment. In 2027, we will need to make another adjustment to our rates to cover the next portion of those increased power costs.

Why does this have such a significant impact on our rates? Because approximately 72% of Clay-Union's total expenses go toward purchasing power. In other words, when the cost of the electricity we purchase goes up, it has a direct and significant impact on what it costs us to provide electricity to you.

If you look at the financial information included in this magazine, you will also see that Clay-Union does not operate with a large margin. That is intentional. We are a not-for-profit cooperative, and our purpose is to provide reliable electric service—not to generate large profits. But operating with a modest margin also means we have limited ability to absorb major increases in our costs without passing some of those costs along to our members.

At the time I am writing this, our team is still working through the 2027 budget and final rate adjustments. I don't have final numbers to share with you yet, and I know that makes it difficult to plan ahead. As soon as those decisions are finalized, we will communicate them clearly and explain what they mean for you.

I also want you to know that we don't take these decisions lightly. Every dollar we spend is a dollar that ultimately affects our member-owners. We will continue looking for ways to control costs, operate efficiently, and make responsible investments in the cooperative while maintaining the safe and reliable service you expect from Clay-Union.

Electricity is something we all depend on every day. Our job is to make sure it is there when you need it, today and for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued support, understanding, and partnership. We are proud to serve you, and we will continue working hard to make sure Clay-Union remains a strong, reliable, and member-focused cooperative.

Steve Tilton
General Manager

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

CLAY-UNION ELECTRIC SPARKS

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KEEP SAFETY AT THE HEART OF YOUR HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

The holiday season, stretching from late November through mid-January, is widely considered the most joyous time of the year. Families gather, festive parties fill our calendars, and a spirit of generosity warms our homes. However, alongside the cheer comes a significant spike in travel, home decorating, and large-scale cooking. Consequently, preventable accidents and injuries dramatically increase during these months. To ensure your family and friends remain safe and injury-free throughout the festivities, keeping safety top of mind is crucial. Below is a comprehensive guide of tried-and-true advice to help you navigate the season securely.

Traveling for the Holidays? Be Prepared and Alert

For millions of people, the holidays mean hitting the road to visit loved ones. Unfortunately, car travel during this busy period carries the highest fatality rate of any major transportation form. Hundreds tragically lose their lives in crashes on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day alone. Alarmingly, alcohol impairment contributes to approximately one-third of these fatal incidents.

To stay safe on the roads, follow these essential guidelines:

- Winterize your vehicle: Prepare for harsh weather and keep a well-stocked emergency kit in your trunk.
- Rest up: Get plenty of sleep before departing to avoid the severe dangers of drowsy driving.
- Plan ahead: Leave early and anticipate heavy traffic to eliminate the dangerous temptation to speed.
- Buckle up: Ensure every passenger is properly restrained, regardless of the trip's length.
- Eliminate distractions: Put your cell phone away; it remains the primary driving distraction today.
- Designate a driver: Always use a completely sober driver. Alcohol and medications cause severe impairment.

Decorate with Caution and Care

Decking the halls instantly puts families in a holiday mood, but hospital emergency departments treat thousands of decorating-related injuries annually. Remember these safety tips:

- Keep poisonous seasonal plants, like mistletoe and holly berries, strictly out of the reach of children.
- If utilizing an artificial tree, verify it is clearly labeled as "fire resistant."
- For live trees, cut two inches off the trunk for better water absorption. Water daily and remove it when dry.
- Place your tree at least three feet away from fireplaces, radiators, and space heaters.
- Discard and replace light sets featuring broken sockets, frayed wires, or loose electrical connections.
- Turn off all holiday lights before going to bed or leaving the house.

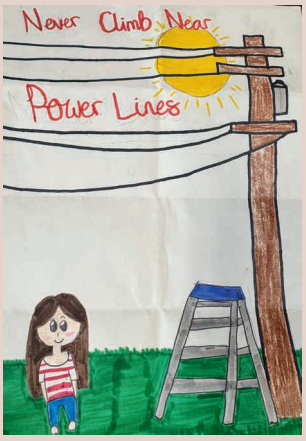
Watch Out for Holiday Fire-Starters

The glow of candles and fireplaces is a holiday staple, but combined with combustible decorations, house fire risks skyrocket. The National Fire Protection Association notes candles cause 46% of December home fires.

- Place candles in sturdy holders away from curtains and curious children.
- Store matches and lighters in a locked, high cabinet.
- Consider battery-operated flameless candles as a very safe alternative.
- Never burn pine branches or wrapping paper in fireplaces; they can cause flash fires.
- Use a protective screen for burning fires and never leave lit candles unattended.

Be highly alert to the extreme dangers of turkey fryers. Hundreds of fires and severe burns are linked to these devices. Consider using oil-less fryers or purchasing fried turkeys from professionals. If you must fry your own, strictly follow all U.S. Fire Administration guidelines.

By taking these simple, proactive steps, you can protect loved ones and ensure your holidays remain merry, bright, and safe.



"Never climb near power lines."

Penelope Poppen

Penelope warns readers to never climb near power lines. Thank you for sharing, Penelope! Penelope's parents are Brett and Megan Poppen, members of Black Hills Electric Cooperative.

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.



THE FAMILY TABLE

ENCHILADA CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

1 lb. hamburger
1 medium onion, chopped
1 green pepper, chopped
1 can (10 oz.) enchilada sauce
6 tortilla shells
1 cup shredded cheese
1 can pinto beans

Method

In a glass baking dish, put the browned hamburger, onion, pepper, beans and sauce in shells and roll up. Layer with shredded cheese on top. Bake 20 minutes in oven.
Optional: Use 1 cup of sliced black olives on top of cheese

Marla Gilbert
Southeastern Electric

PARTY IN A PAN

Ingredients:

1 1/2 lbs. hamburger, browned
1 can cream of celery soup
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 box Stove Top Stuffing Mix
1 can corn, drained
3 cups mozzarella cheese, shredded

Method

Combine the hamburger, celery soup and chicken soup in a bowl and set aside.
Prepare the Stove Top Stuffing as directed on the box. Layer half the hamburger mixture, half the corn, half the stuffing, and half the cheese; repeat layers again. Bake 30-40 minutes at 350°F or until cheese is melted.
Makes a 9x13-inch pan.

Kathy Zomer
Douglas Electric

BEEF TERIYAKI

Ingredients:

1lb. boneless beef sirloin steak
2 tbsp. cornstarch
14 oz. beef broth
2 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp. brown sugar
1/4 tsp. garlic powder
3 cups broccoli florets
1 1/2 cups rice
1 2/3 cups water

Method

Cook the rice in water according to the directions on the bag.
Slice beef in very thin strips. In a large skillet, saute the beef strips until browned and the juices evaporate.
In a mixing bowl, combine cornstarch, beef broth, soy sauce, brown sugar and garlic powder. Mix thoroughly.
Add the liquid mixture and broccoli florets to the beef. Cook until mixture boils & thickens to a desired consistency, stirring frequently.
Serve over the cooked rice.

Karen Soulek
Charles-Mix Electric

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 2026. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Picture from Shutterstock.

Optimize Your HVAC System

Jackie Williams
Marketing/
Communications

As November settles in and temperatures begin to drop, your HVAC system will soon become one of the hardest-working appliances in your home. Before your system undergoes all that extra work this winter, now is a great time to ensure it is optimized and ready to go.

Start with something simple. One of the easiest and most effective measures you can take is checking filters. A clogged or dirty filter makes it harder for air to move through your system, which can cause it to work longer and harder than necessary. Check filters regularly and replace them according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Vents matter too. Take a look around your home to make sure furniture, curtains, rugs and other household items aren't blocking any supply or return vents.

If you have a heat pump, your outdoor unit also deserves extra attention this time of year. Falling leaves, limbs and other debris can collect around the unit and restrict airflow, so keep the area around your outdoor unit clear. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning recommendations. If you have a traditional central air conditioning system, your outdoor unit will likely remain idle during winter months, but it's still good practice to keep it clear of debris.

Don't overlook what you can't see. With forced-air systems, ductwork plays an essential role in delivering heated air throughout your home. Leaks, gaps or disconnected sections can allow conditioned air to escape before it reaches the rooms where you need it. If you've noticed rooms that never seem to get comfortable or unusually high energy use, ask an HVAC professional to inspect your ductwork.

Fall is also an ideal time for a professional tune-up. A technician can inspect your heating system, identify potential problems and make sure it is operating safely and efficiently before the coldest weather arrives. Regular professional maintenance can also help extend the life of your equipment.

Finally, take more control of your energy use by proactively managing your thermostat. There's no reason to heat an empty house. Lowering the temperature when you're asleep or away can help reduce energy use. Better yet, a programmable or smart thermostat can make those adjustments automatically, taking one more thing off your to-do list.

Your home heating system has an important job this winter. Giving it a little extra attention this fall to help the system operate more efficiently, reduce unnecessary energy use and potentially prevent an inconvenient breakdown on a cold winter night.



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HONORING OUR HEROES

Veterans Memorial Undergoing Revamp

The WWII memorial on Capitol Lake shows soldiers saluting the American flag after battle. Later, after the Korean and Vietnam soldier statues and walls were added beneath the flag, the WWII veterans appear to salute them too. *Photo by Jacob Boyko*

Jacob Boyko
jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Lee Leuning's father was about 80 when he sat in his son's sculpting studio to become the sailor at South Dakota's World War II memorial.

For three days, Leuning studied his face and shaped his features. His father slowly began talking about the war. After 50 years, the experience still weighed heavy.

Today, more than 25 years later, Leuning's father stands immortalized in bronze on the shore of Capitol Lake in Pierre, representing sailors like himself who served in World War II.

He stands among five other slightly larger-than-life statues representing members of the U.S. armed forces. The display, called "Why We Fought," depicts the service members in tattered uniforms saluting toward the American flag.

"It's soldiers in each individual moment stepping out of battle and recognizing the flag and what they fought for," Leuning said.

A member of Northern Electric Cooperative, Leuning created the figures with fellow sculptor Sherri Treeby. Visitors to Pierre will find their work throughout the city, including statues along the Trail of Governors and a relief plaque commemorating the Lt. Cmdr. John C. Waldron Memorial Bridge. At Capitol Lake, their sculptures honor veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

Several of the World War II figures have family connections. Leuning used his mother's likeness for the army corps mechanic – she served as a plane mechanic in WWII – and his sons as models for the pilot and Marine. Treeby's father, an Army veteran, provided the face of the Coast Guardsman.

The WWII memorial was the first memorial unveiled, dedicated by Gov. Bill Janklow just four days after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Leuning recalls being amazed by the turnout – thousands of visitors were at the Capitol for the dedication.

He remembers one Navy veteran watching the dedication parade from a hospital bed with an attendant.

"Every time a flag came by with an honor guard … that guy would have his aide get him out of the bed, and he'd snap to attention," Leuning said. "That, to me, showed this really means something to them."



Recent renovation improved water drainage. Previously, water under the granite tiles caused loosening. The tiles have since been replaced with sod grass. The stream bed was also replaced. *Photo by Jacob Boyko*

Subsequent dedications for the Korean and Vietnam memorials during Gov. Mike Rounds' administration attracted even more visitors. The state estimated 32,000 people attended the two-day Vietnam dedication in 2006. Some veterans watched the ceremony from pontoon bridges on Capitol Lake.

Unfortunately, years of exposure have taken a toll on the site. Trapped water beneath the granite tiles caused some to loosen and crumble, explained Leah Haugan, Special Projects Coordinator for the South Dakota Bureau of Human Resources and Administration.

"Try as we might to keep it in great shape, you can't keep up with deteriorating stone," Haugan said.

Over the summer, the state began work on a renovation project for the memorials, which will bring some changes to the site.

Sections of granite have been replaced with grass. The military seals embedded in the walkway were lifted out and placed on pedestals. The stream from the Artesian well remains, but it's now bordered by a concrete curb. The granite tiles around the fountain were upgraded from ¾ inch thick tiles to 2 inch thick tiles, and the fountain enclosure was remade with concrete and granite tiles around the top.

Restoring the site is part of the state's commitment to honoring veterans and their service, Haugan said.

"Words are words, but when you build something like that that memorializes their efforts and their sacrifice, I think that shows them there's proof positive that we recognize and honor them," Haugan said.

The renovation does not bring back the Flaming Fountain's flame. Methane rising from the artesian well that feeds Capitol Lake kept the flame burning for decades, but it went out around 2015 when the flow could no longer sustain it. Haugan said a more ambitious fountain project is among the ideas for the site, depending on funding.

A separate proposal would honor Native American code talkers who served in World Wars I and II using their native languages to transmit messages that enemy forces were not able to translate. Funding for that memorial also remains unresolved.

Visiting the memorials, Leuning has seen what that recognition can mean to a family. The day after the Vietnam memorial dedication, he returned to take photos and was approached by a woman asking him to take her picture. He obliged, and the lady went up to the bronze statue and hugged it.

"She said, 'That's my Davy. It looks just like my Davy.'"

Then she pointed to her husband's name on the wall.



Leuning's Vietnam War memorial.
Photo submitted by Lee Leuning



Sculptor Lee Leuning with his dad, Donald Leuning, at the World War II Veterans Memorial dedication Sept. 15, 2001, in Pierre.
Photo submitted by Lee Leuning



An estimated 32,000 people attended the Vietnam War Memorial dedication in 2006.
U.S. Airforce Photo by 1st Lt. Carrie L. Kessler

Attention High School Juniors and Seniors Win a Trip to Washington D.C.

Clay-Union Electric will be sponsoring two (2) high school (juniors and seniors) on an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. slated for June 17-23, 2027. Over 1800 high school juniors and seniors travel to Washington, D.C., to participate in the Rural Electric Youth Tour. During the week, they learn about Washington, D.C., government, cooperative philosophy, and rural electrification. The students are selected and sponsored by their local rural electric cooperatives. The South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) coordinates arrangements for the South Dakota students.

Tour highlights include: the Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, U.S. Capitol, Ford's Theatre, Arlington National Cemetery, Mount Vernon, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Iwo Jima Statue, National Archives, U.S Supreme Court, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial among other exciting sites. Students will also participate in a briefing with the South Dakota Congressional Delegation and a river boat cruise across the Potomac River.

Who is Eligible? All area high school juniors and seniors whose parents or guardians are members of Clay-Union Electric.

What Does It Cost? Clay-Union Electric, along with the other local electric cooperatives that participate in the week long event, funds the tour. The funding for the tour provides for each participant's transportation, room and board, entertainment, and sightseeing events. Students are required to provide their own spending money (snacks and souvenirs).

How do I Qualify? Each applicant must participate in an interview with their local cooperative discussing their current extracurricular involvement, community volunteerism and future endeavors. To set up an interview, please call Jackie at 605-624-2673.

Deadline to apply is November 18, 2026.











South Dakota's Electric Co-ops Urge Caution During Controlled Burns

Abby Berry
NRECA

South Dakota's farmers play an essential role in keeping communities across our state thriving, and we appreciate their hard work and dedication throughout the year. As the harvest season comes to a close and fields are prepared for the year ahead, we are reminding farmers to exercise safety when conducting controlled burns near utility poles and other electrical equipment.

Over the next few months, many farmers will conduct controlled burns to clear crop stubble and weeds and prepare fields for spring planting. While controlled burns are an effective way to manage agricultural land, they can also pose serious risks to nearby utility poles, power lines and other electrical equipment. South Dakota's electric cooperatives urge farm workers to use extreme caution when planning and conducting burns near electrical infrastructure.

Every year, utility poles are damaged during controlled burns in fields, along roadsides and in ditches. The danger is compounded by the delayed visibility of pole damage after the fire has passed. Most wooden utility poles are treated with chemical preservatives, including creosote, to protect them from decay. When exposed to fire, the pole can sustain hidden damage. Embers can become lodged in cracks or other openings and continue burning inside the wood long after the flames have disappeared. In some cases, a utility pole can burn from the inside out and collapse hours or even days after a controlled burn has ended.

A damaged utility pole can create a dangerous situation for farm workers, co-op crews and the public. Repairing or replacing a utility pole can be expensive and time-consuming. More importantly, a weakened pole can fall unexpectedly, potentially bringing power lines down with it. Depending on the location and extent of the damage, a single compromised pole can result in power outages affecting homes, farms and entire communities.

Farmers planning controlled burns should keep the following safety measures in mind:

- Maintain a safe distance from utility equipment. Avoid burning directly beneath or near utility poles, guy wires, transformers and other electrical equipment.
- Monitor the weather. Avoid burning during dry, windy conditions when flames and embers can spread quickly.
- Create firebreaks. Clear vegetation and other combustible materials around the area to keep the fire contained.
- Have water and firefighting equipment nearby. Be prepared to respond if the fire moves beyond the intended burn area.
- Monitor the fire until it is completely extinguished. Never assume a fire is out simply because flames are no longer visible.
- Inspect nearby utility poles after the burn. If a pole is actively burning, call the fire department. If a pole appears scorched, damaged or otherwise compromised, contact your electric cooperative. Never attempt to repair electrical equipment yourself.

Controlled burns are an important part of managing many agricultural operations, but they should be conducted safely. If you have questions about how a planned burn could affect nearby electrical equipment, contact your electric co-op before you begin.

South Dakota's electric cooperatives appreciate everyone doing their part to protect themselves, their neighbors and the electrical infrastructure that helps power this state's communities every day.



How a Youth Tour Friendship Changed Marty Larsen's Life

The 1969 South Dakota Youth Tour group. Marty Larsen is pictured in the top row, seventh from the right. John Nordlie is pictured in the top row, fifth from the left. *Photo courtesy from the SDREA Archives*

Frank Turner
frank.turner@sdrea.coop

When Marty Larsen earned a spot on the 1969 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., through Turner-Hutchinson Electric Cooperative, he had every reason to believe dairy farming would remain at the center of his life. Turner-Hutchinson, a predecessor of today's Southeastern Electric Cooperative, served the area around his family's dairy farm seven miles west of Hurley.

Youth Tour gives high school students sponsored by their local electric cooperatives the chance to spend a week in Washington, D.C., visiting historic sites, learning about government and electric cooperatives and meeting students from across the country. South Dakota began sending students on the trip in 1963. Larsen went just six years later.

Back then, Turner-Hutchinson Electric selected its Youth Tour delegates through 4-H, rewarding young people for their accomplishments. In 1969,

Larsen placed eighth at the national 4-H dairy judging competition in Ohio. The accomplishment earned him the cooperative's Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C.

But before Larsen could make the trip, an Army recruiter threw a wrench in his plans, warning him that he was likely to be called for service soon. Rather than wait to be drafted, Larsen chose to enlist, expecting to head to basic training and then Vietnam.

Not long after, Larsen received an induction notice, but first he had to complete a military physical. Larsen, who is hard of hearing, failed the hearing test and was disqualified from service. Had he passed, he said he would have left for basic training about a week before the 1969 Youth Tour departed.

"Somebody upstairs was looking out for me," he said.

With the Army no longer standing in the way, Larsen was going on the trip. To prepare, his mother bought him new clothes and a new pair of shoes. Even still, he returned home with the soles nearly worn through. At the Washington Monument, he and a small group of students climbed 897 steps rather than wait in the long elevator line, then rode the elevator back down.

Near the end of the trip, the group ate at a seafood restaurant along the Potomac River. Larsen persuaded the chaperones that the students ought to try lobster, something many of them had never eaten before. When the waitress brought lobster bibs to the table, Larsen passed his around and asked everyone to sign it.

His mother later saved the bib in the scrapbook she kept of his childhood, alongside years of 4-H ribbons, judging cards and other keepsakes. Larsen still has the scrapbook today.

The students took an evening cruise on a multilevel paddlewheel-style boat on the Potomac, complete with live music. South Dakota Youth Tour students continue the tradition of a river cruise today aboard the Cherry Blossom.

For Larsen, though, the most important part of Youth Tour was the people he met. One of them was John Nordlie of Sioux Falls, a young photographer who worked with the Argus Leader and later attended Augustana College.

The two became friends during the trip and stayed in contact after returning home.

"We stayed friends after we got back," he said. "I was in his wedding party when he got married. He was in my wedding party when I got married."

For the next several years, Larsen stayed close to the life he knew, working in dairy and welding. Nordlie, meanwhile, developed an interest in pipe organs. In 1983, he called Larsen and asked if he wanted to come work for him building organs for cathedrals and music halls.

Larsen agreed, bringing his experience as a welder, machinist and mechanical problem-solver into a trade he had never expected to enter. He spent the next 20 years working with Nordlie and became deeply involved in the mechanics of organ construction.

His work eventually went far beyond basic fabrication. Larsen built components, developed specialty tools and designed machinery for organ builders. One machine he created transformed a wire-bending process that had taken workers several minutes per piece, allowing them to produce several pieces per minute. Other tools he built ended up with organ companies elsewhere in the United States and overseas.

The work also took Larsen far beyond southeastern South Dakota. Over the years, he traveled throughout the country and to Japan, worked on historic instruments and helped construct and restore pipe organs in churches, museums and other settings. More than four decades after entering the trade, he is still involved in restoration work.

Looking back, Larsen can draw a direct line from the Youth Tour trip to the career that followed. Without the trip, he may never have met Nordlie. Without that friendship, the call inviting him into organ building may never have come.

"It meant a lot to me to be able to go on that trip," Larsen said. "It changed me from a dairy farmer to a pipe organ builder."

More than 50 years later, Larsen still has the scrapbook his mother kept from the trip, along with the signed lobster bib awnd other reminders of that week in Washington. But the most lasting thing he brought home was the friendship that, years later, opened the door to a life he never could have planned.



Marty Larsen and his wife, Barbara.
Photo by Frank Turner

Interested in attending Youth Tour?
Contact your local electric cooperative to learn more about the application process.

Clay-Union Electric Corporation

Board Meeting Summary

AUGUST 21, 2026 • VERMILLION, SOUTH DAKOTA

The board meeting was called to order on August 21, 2026, 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 Directors Tom Larsen, Chris Kinney, Sara Schulte and Glen Gilbertson. The board seat for District #5 is vacant. Attending staff members included Steve Tilton, Beth Bottolfson, and Alan Gauer.

Agenda (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the agenda as presented.
Approval of Minutes from the July Board Meeting (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the minutes of the July Board Meeting held on July 27, 2026.
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.

Management Reports:
Manager's Report - Manager Tilton discussed the following activities:
• September Board Meeting – The date of September 25th, was set as the next regular board meeting to begin at 8:30 a.m.
• East River REED/MAC - The REED Board met on August 2nd for the monthly meeting.
• Meter Reading Issues – A CCU on the Canon system failed, leaving more than 800 meters unread.
• Clay County Fair, Member/Community Appreciation - The wet weather slowed things down, but we still had the opportunity to visit with many members who stopped by.
• CFC Director 6 Candidates (ACTION) - A motion was made, seconded, and approved to appoint Steve Tilton as the delegate for the director's election at the NRECA Region VI meeting in September.
• Basin Electric Annual Meeting - The Basin Electric Annual Meeting was held August 11th, 12th, and 13th in Bismarck, ND.
• Meters (ACTION) – A motion was made, seconded and approved to authorize Manager Tilton to confirm proceeding with IRBY's quote for Cellular & Revelo Meters for inclusion in the 2027 budget.

Administrative Report – Manager of Finance and Administration Bottolfson reviewed the following reports with the board:
- Billing Activity
- Financials for July 2026
- NRECA renewal rates
- Capital Credits, General Retirements

All reports were posted to the website earlier for board review.
Operations Report – Operations Manager Gauer reviewed the following reports with the board:
- Monthly department work summary
- New Service
- Retired Services
- July Outage Report
- Damage to Clay-Union
- Service Upgrades
- Wiring

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
- Irrigation Sales 2020-2026
- kWh Sales Report
- Large Power
- Line Loss
- Operating Statement
- Power Bill
- Summary of Purchased Power

All reports were posted to the website earlier for board review.
Safety Meeting Minutes – The July Safety Meeting Minutes and an update from Federated Rural Electric Insurance were posted to the website for the board to review and was discussed during the meeting.
Cyber Security – The July Cyber Security report from East River IT were 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

Calendar – The board reviewed the September 2026 calendar.
Executive Session – The board went into Executive Session at 10:44 a.m., Executive Session was adjourned at 11:10 a.m. There was no action taken.
Adjournment – There being no further business, a motion was made, seconded, and carried, to adjourn the meeting at 11:11 a.m.

Thomas Larsen, President **Sara Schulte, Secretary**

ENERGY EFFICIENCY
TIP OF THE MONTH



Adjust your water heater settings to save energy. As cooler weather arrives, your water heater may be working harder to keep up with longer, hotter showers. Check its temperature setting and consider lowering it to 120°F, which the U.S. Department of Energy recommends for most households. Lowering the temperature can reduce energy use while also helping prevent scalding. Always check the owner's manual before making adjustments.

Source: Dept. of Energy

YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIALS

	August 2026	Year To Date
Total Revenue	$1,125,588	$7,958,170
Wholesale Power Costs	$603,273	$4,581,724
Operating Expenses	$189,779	$1,587,092
Total Margins	$181,348	$353,975
kWh's Purchased	8,157,739	61,804,592
Members Billed		3,915
Miles of Line		1,195
Members per Mile		3.28

Wholesale power costs, taxes, interest and depreciation account for 79% of Total Cost of Service.

Outage Reports

Cause	Date	Time	Township	Members
Tree Branch	9/2/2026	9:30 p.m.	Pleasant Valley	21
Tree Branch	9/2/2026	9:30 p.m.	Garfield	26
Storms	9/2/2026	9:30 p.m.	Vermillion	5
Tree Branch	9/2/2026	11:30 p.m.	Emmet	1
Tree Branch	9/3/2026	1:30 a.m.	Norway	4
Lightning	9/6/2026	3:00 p.m.	Norway	4
Animal	9/6/2026	10:00 p.m.	Star	19
Contractor	9/11/2026	9:30 a.m.	Marindahl	11
UG Fault	9/14/2026	6:00 p.m.	Fairview	214
Weather	9/26/2026	12:00 p.m.	Norway	1
Animal	9/27/2026	10:00 a.m.	Glenwood	204

To clarify 12:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. provided by ChatGPT:
12:00 a.m. = midnight (the start of a new day)
12:00 p.m. = noon (the middle of the day)

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 by the first of the following month, a $30 collection fee will be applied and a 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:

Online Billing:
www.clayunionelectric.coop
Set up your user profile to manage your account, pay your bill and receive billing notification emails.
Bank Draft: Have your payment automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the due date.
Recurring Credit/Debit Card: Have your payment automatically deducted from your card on the due date.
By Phone: Call in your credit/debit card payment.
In Office: We accept cash, check, money order or credit/debit card.
By Mail: Send check or money order with your payment slip.
Drop Box: Located on the right side of our main entrance at 31321 SD Hwy 19.
There are no additional fees to use any of the above payment methods.

Collection Fee	$30
Trip Charge-Reconnect Fee During Business Hours	$75
Dishonored Payment	$40

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



NOV. 7
Wine, Cheese & Chocolate Stroll
Deadwood, SD
www.deadwood.com/events/

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.

NOV. 1
Kadoka Holiday Festival
10 a.m.-4 p.m. (MDT)
Lunch 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Kadoka City Auditorium
Kadoka, SD
605-488-0151

NOV. 6-8
Hill City Girlfriends' Weekend
Hill City, SD

NOV. 7
Fall Fling Craft/Vendor Show
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Dakota Christian School
Corsica, SD

NOV. 7
Black Hills Meat Fest
Free Admission
Central States Fairgrounds
Nerdy Nuts Expo Hall
Rapid City, SD
Facebook.com/BlackHillsMeatFest

NOV. 7-15
Rustic Designs & More Christmas Country Show
9 a.m.-5 p.m.
41450 264th St.
Ethan, SD
605-770-2411

NOV. 8
32nd Annual Lutefisk, Meatball & Lefse Supper
4-7 p.m.
Trinity Lutheran Church
Chamberlain, SD
605-730-0553

NOV. 12
The Satin Dollz
Patriotic Female Vocal & Dance Quintet
7 p.m.
Johnson Fine Arts Center
Aberdeen, SD
aberdeencommunityconcerts.org

NOV. 14
Lake Campbell Lutheran Church Lutefisk Supper
Seatings: 4:30, 5:45, 7 p.m.
Volga, SD
Reservations: 605-690-4868

NOV. 14-15
Zonta Holiday Craft & Vendor Show
Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Ramkota Hotel
Pierre, SD

NOV. 16-21
Yelduz Shrine Festival of Trees
Mon.-Fri. 4-7 p.m.
Sat. 11 a.m.-6 p.m.
802 S. Main St.
Aberdeen, SD
605-225-4841
Yelduz.com

NOV. 20
Aberdeen University Civic Symphony Concert
7:30 p.m.
Johnson Fine Arts Center
Aberdeen, SD
aberdeencommunityconcerts.org

NOV. 21
Lille Norge Fest
8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Canyon Lake Activity Center
2900 Canyon Lake Dr.
Rapid City, SD
borgundlodge.org

NOV. 27-28
Sip, Shop & Stroll
Viborg, SD

NOV. 28
Gregory Mid-Winter Fair
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Gregory Memorial Auditorium
Gregory, SD
605-830-9778

DEC. 3
City of Yankton Holiday Festival of Lights
4 p.m. Family Activities
6 p.m. Lighted Parade
Yankton, SD
605-665-5234
CityofYankton.com

DEC. 5
Holiday Jam with the Hegg Brothers
4 p.m.
Yankton, SD
605-665-5234
CityofYankton.com

Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.