



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



DAKOTA ENERGY

MAY 2025 VOL. 26 NO. 1

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Gardening Greats

**Master Gardeners
Cultivating Community
Growth**

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Bridging History
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Photo courtesy of SDSU Extension.

Line Workers are Wired for Service



Chad Felderman
CEO/General
Manager

Before the sun rises, while most of us remain tucked in our beds, line workers start their day. Clad in flame-resistant clothing, safety goggles, rubber gloves, and thick, heavy boots, they embody dedication to service in its purest form. As we celebrate Line Worker Appreciation Day on April 14, it is an important time to reflect on the vital role they play in our daily lives.

Amid towering utility poles and miles of power lines, line workers show a strength beyond the physical. Whether braving extreme weather, troubleshooting complex technical issues, or navigating treacherous heights, they exhibit resilience and determination. Their efforts keep our lights on, our homes comfortable, and our communities connected.

Dakota Energy crews work tirelessly across our service territory, building, maintaining, and repairing our local electrical system. Their skills ensure homes remain powered, businesses stay operational, and emergency services remain accessible.

In times of crisis, when the lights go out, line workers answer the call. Their

swift response restores power and provides reassurance in moments of uncertainty. Whether repairing storm-ravaged power lines or responding to emergencies, their unwavering commitment lights the way when we need it most.

Beyond our local communities, Dakota Energy line workers extend their service to fellow cooperatives in need. When widespread outages occur, they travel near and far, offering critical assistance. This cooperation among cooperatives is one of our seven guiding principles, and no one embodies this core value better than our dedicated line workers.

This month, as we honor these individuals who work tirelessly to ensure reliable power, let us recognize their dedication to the communities they serve. The next time you flip a switch, take a moment to appreciate those who make it possible—line workers, wired for service and committed to illuminating our lives.



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

DAKOTA ENERGY

(USPS No. 018-949)

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Manager of Member Services: Jeff Gilbert

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Protecting Your Privacy Online: Avoiding Social Media Oversharing



Social media is a great way to stay connected with friends and family, but sharing too much can put your personal security at risk. Here's some tips on how to stay safe while enjoying social media:

Be Cautious with Location Sharing

- Avoid posting your exact location, especially your home address.
- Turn off automatic location tracking on apps like Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat.
- If you're on vacation, wait until you return home to post about it.

Think Before Posting About Expensive Items

- Sharing photos of new gadgets, cars, or home upgrades can attract thieves.
- Be mindful of showing security systems, door locks, keys, or alarm placements in your pictures.

Limit Details About Your Daily Routine

- Avoid sharing when you're away from home for long periods.
- Be mindful of posting work schedules or when your house is empty.

Watch for Scammers and Fake Profiles

- Be cautious of friend requests from strangers or duplicate accounts pretending to be someone you know.
- Scammers often watch public profiles for personal details they can use in phishing attacks.

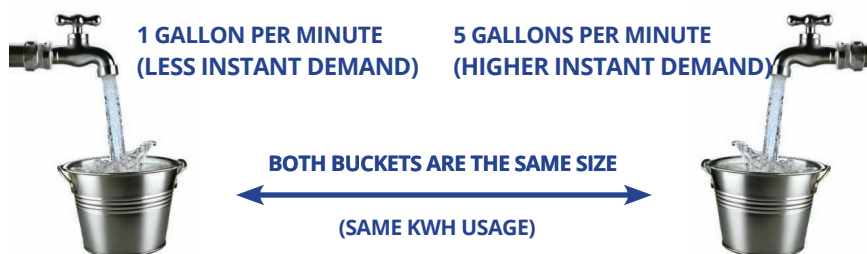
Check Your Privacy Settings

- Set your social media profiles to private so only trusted friends and family can see your posts.
- Regularly review who can see your information and limit public access.

By being mindful of what you share, you can enjoy social media while keeping your personal information safe.

DEMAND USAGE IS BASED ON HOW MUCH KWH IS BEING USED AT A GIVEN MOMENT

It's like filling up a five-gallon bucket with water. If you're in a hurry, you turn the water on high and fill it fast. This would be a larger demand. You can also choose to fill it slowly over time. This would be a smaller demand. The same can be said for using electricity, if you run more appliances at the same time, your demand increases. If you choose to run them one at a time, this decreases your demand. Your demand usage has been added to your monthly bill for the purpose of seeing how much demand you are using during the month.



Power Life Safely

May is Electrical Safety Month

Every May, Electrical Safety Month serves as a vital reminder of the importance of preventing electrical hazards at home. Electricity powers nearly every aspect of modern life, but if handled improperly, it can pose serious risks, including injuries and property damage.

Your electric cooperative understands the risks associated with improper electricity use, which is why we're committed to reminding you to stay vigilant and practice electrical safety not only in May, but year-round.

By following key safety practices, you can reduce the risk of electrical hazards and ensure your family stays protected. Here are five essential tips for powering up safely at home.

1. **Be vigilant.** Regularly inspect your home's electrical system for any signs of damage or outdated components and replace any frayed electrical wires or cords. The Electrical Safety Foundation International estimates roughly 3,300 home fires originate from extension cords every year, either from overloading, overheating or fraying. If you're relying on extension cords as permanent power solutions, consider contacting a qualified electrician to install additional outlets where you need them.
2. **Use Surge Protectors.** Safeguard your sensitive electronics and appliances from surges with surge protectors. These handy devices help divert excess voltage away from your electronics, reducing the risk of damage or electrical fires. Not all power strips include surge protection, so read the product label carefully. Additionally, surge protectors can lose effectiveness over time and should be replaced when damaged or outdated.
3. **Practice Safe Power Strip Use.** Avoid overloading electrical outlets with power strips that exceed the outlet's capacity. High-energy devices, like heaters, microwaves and hairdryers should be distributed across multiple outlets. Overloading an outlet with a "busy" power strip can lead to overheating and create a fire hazard, so be sure to check the power strip's wattage rating before plugging in items.

4. **Water and Electricity Don't Mix.** It may seem obvious, but accidents involving water contact with electrical items happen. Always keep electrical appliances and devices away from water sources, like sinks, bathtubs or swimming pools. Make sure your hands are dry before touching any electrical switches or appliances – never handle electrical devices with wet hands. Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) should be installed in areas where water and electricity are typically in close proximity, including kitchens, bathrooms and outdoor outlets.
5. **Educate Family Members.** One of the best ways to ensure the safety of everyone in your household is to talk about electrical safety. Teach children not to play with electrical outlets or appliances and ensure they understand the potential dangers of electricity. Create and practice a home fire escape plan that includes electrical safety precautions in case of emergencies.

Practicing electrical safety at home is essential for protecting your family, property and peace of mind. Remember, electrical safety isn't just a one-time effort – it's a year-round responsibility. Taking these steps can help ensure a safer, more secure home for you and your loved ones.



"Don't plant trees near power lines."

Jeremiah Barlow

Jeremiah cautions readers not to plant trees near power lines. Thank you for your picture, Jeremiah! Jeremiah's parents are Mosiah and Cristine Barlow, members of West River Electric Association.

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



Delicious CHICKEN

CHICKEN BREAST SUPREME

Ingredients:

4 chicken breasts
(boned and halved)
8 strips bacon
2 pkgs. chipped beef
8 oz. sour cream
1 can cream of chicken soup
6 oz. evaporated milk

Method

Wrap each half of chicken breast in a piece of bacon. Place in a baking dish lined with two layers of chipped beef.

Blend sour cream, soup, and milk. Pour over chicken.

Bake uncovered at 300°F for three hours. Serve over rice.

*Makes 8 servings.

Sharon Houchin
Central Electric Member

CHICKEN ROLLUPS

Ingredients:

8 oz. tube crescent rolls
4 boneless chicken breasts
(cooked shredded and seasoned to taste)
8 oz. cheddar cheese
(finely shredded, divided)
10 1/2 oz. can cream of chicken soup
1 packet chicken gravy mix
1 cup water

Method

In a bowl, mix the shredded chicken and 1/3 of the cheese. Take a scoop of the mixture and roll it into a crescent roll then place in a greased 9" x 13" pan. Bake at 350°F until the crescent rolls look browned on top. Mix the soup, gravy mix, 1/3 of the cheese, and enough water to make the mixture pourable. Pour over the crescent rolls. Sprinkle the remaining 1/3 of the cheese on top and bake again until the cheese melts and starts to brown.

Nicole Einrem
B-Y Electric Member

SMOKY CHICKEN TACOS

Ingredients:

1 tbsp. oil
1 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breast, cut into thin strips
1/4 cup Flavor Maker Taco Night Topping Seasoning
1/2 cup water
12 (6-inch) flour or corn tortillas, warmed

Method

Heat oil in large skillet on medium-high heat. Add chicken; cook and stir just until browned.

Stir in Flavor Maker Seasoning and water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes or until sauce has thickened and chicken is cooked through, stirring occasionally.

Spoon chicken into warm tortillas. Serve with desired toppings, such as shredded lettuce, shredded cheese, sour cream, guac or salsa.

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 2025. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Most of us never think about the electric, gas, water, and other utility lines buried below the ground, but hitting one of these lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want—trust us! If you are planning a digging project, call 811 at least three business days before you start. Or you can submit a request online by visiting www.sdonecall.com.

When putting
in a mailbox
CALL 811



When planting
a garden
CALL 811



When building
a deck
CALL 811



When adding
a fence
CALL 811



Keep your family, friends, and neighborhood safe by remembering these five easy steps to ensure safe digging.

1

NOTIFY



Call 811 or submit a request online two to three days before you start. The utilities affected by your project will be notified.

2

WAIT



Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

3

CONFIRM



Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 811 call center notified.

4

RESPECT



Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.

5

BE CAREFUL



Dig carefully. If you can't avoid digging near the markers, consider moving your project location.



Know what's below. Call before you dig.

Before you dig call 811 or visit www.sdonecall.com.

FEBRUARY 2025

The Board of Directors met on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, with Directors Baruth, Baum, Bonebright, Langbehn, Morford, Nemec, Raschke, Schaefer, and Wangsness present. Manager Felderman and Employees Gilbert, Hasart, Picek, Rakness, and Zomer were present.

MANAGER’S REPORT

Manager Felderman reported on the following items:

- Monthly energy sales and revenue
- Basin Electric
- South Bow LLC
- Crow Creek
- East River Electric
- SDREA
- CFC Bylaw Change
- GHDC
- CRC
- Annual Inventory
- Pole changes
- Energized new transformer at Glacial Lakes
- SCADA installation in Bonilla substation
- Tree trimming
- Power Systems Engineering construction work plan
- Pole hit by vehicle
- Stockten Walter completed the Journeyman Line Worker program
- Trailer sale

OFFICE SERVICES REPORT

Manager of Finance and Administration Hasart reported on the following items:

- Financial reports
- East River bill credit
- Audit fieldwork completed
- 2024 Gross kilowatt hour tax report
- Year-end form 7 & submission
- 2025 Standard costs
- PUC small renewable power rate letter
- Service Work Charges procedure

OPERATIONS REPORT

Manager of Operations Zomer reported on the following items:

- Construction, maintenance and retirement activities

REPORT

Information Technology Administrator Rakness reported on the following items:

- iPads
- Map layer addition
- Website/Cybersecurity

BOARD ACTION

The following items were acted upon:

- Accepted the reports presented
- Approved donation of \$500 to Miller Legion Bull Battle Sponsorship
- Approved policies

BOARD REPORTS

Directors who attended reported on the East River Energize Forum

Director Raschke reported on East River’s February 2025 regular board meeting

Directors Baruth, Langbehn, Morford, Nemec, and Raschke reported on the Cooperative Day at the Capitol

Next monthly board meeting is April 22, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in the Huron office.

MEMBER SERVICES REPORT

Manager of Member Services Gilbert reported on the following items:

- Wiring department workload
- Potential hazards
- Load control savings
- Community and volunteer activities

HUMAN RESOURCES/ COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Manager Felderman reported on the following items:

- Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week
- Scholarships
- OSHA Log 300A complete

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Year-to-Date Financial Report

	Feb-25	Year-to-Date
Total Revenue	\$2,428,225	\$5,067,836
Cost of Power	\$1,681,593	\$3,489,556
Operating Expenses	\$646,153	\$1,332,609
Total Margins	\$142,674	\$501,903
KwH's Purchased	22,628,592	48,427,676
Services in Place		3,638
Miles of Line		2,533
Members per Mile		1.44

Wholesale power costs, taxes, interest, and depreciation account for 81.55% of DEC’s total cost of service.



GARDENING GREATS

How Master Gardeners are Cultivating Community Growth

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdua.coop

After years of tending to her garden, Codington-Clark Electric member Dianne Rider of Hazel can confidently say she is an expert in horticulture. However, her extensive experience of working with the earth isn't the only reason she is considered a soil savant.

In 2016, Rider earned the prodigious title of Master Gardener through the South Dakota State University Extension's Master Gardener Volunteer Program. This program provides in-depth horticultural training – covering topics like plant science, soil management and sustainable gardening practices – so enthusiasts like Rider can share their extensive gardening knowledge with their communities.

Becoming an Extension Master Gardener volunteer is a commitment. Applicants must complete horticulture classes, pass the course test and contribute 40 hours of volunteer service

during the first year of involvement. Despite the challenges, Rider had aspired to this achievement for decades, but it wasn't until she retired from her teaching career that she was able to dedicate herself fully and earn her place as a Master Gardener.

Reflecting the adage, “once a teacher, always a teacher,” Rider continues to educate and influence those around her, even after retirement, through gardening.

“Becoming a Master Gardener has always been on my bucket list since they organized,” Rider said. “I’ve always been a teacher, so finding a way to help others through gardening is probably what’s most rewarding.”

As a Master Gardener, Rider plays a key role in organizing annual gardening events for SDSU Extension, including the Master Gardener Annual Update Conference at Joy Ranch near Watertown. This event, attended by more than 125 Master Gardeners, serves as a thriving forum for gardening clubs to exchange ideas on the latest and greatest

projects they are tackling.

“The event is a lot of fun, because when you get 125 Master Gardeners in one room – let me tell you, the conversations are riveting,” Rider laughed.

Master gardeners also help SDSU Extension achieve its broader goal: to make cutting-edge research easily accessible to the people who can benefit from the findings. Master Gardeners have regular continuing education opportunities with experts from the SDSU Horticulture team, such as Professor John Ball, a SDSU Extension Forestry Specialist and South Dakota Department of Agriculture Forest Health Specialist. Once equipped with this information, volunteers can share the most significant takeaways from research being conducted across the state through the university, providing a bridge between research and practical application.

“Dr. John Ball’s presentation on how to trim a tree after planting it is one of the best things that I’ve learned that I can now share with others,” said Rider. “He says that raising a tree is just like raising a kid: you have to shape your tree when

Missouri Valley Master Gardeners remove invasive bellflower and other non-desirable plants at the Dorothy Jenks Memorial Garden in Yankton.
Photo courtesy of SDSU Extension.

they are young, otherwise they turn into ugly adults.”

Master Gardener Field Specialist Prairey Walkling emphasizes that the connection between research-based information and enthusiasts is what the Master Gardener Volunteer Program thrives on. And the research goes far beyond just trees. SDSU’s horticulture research also extends into innovative mulching techniques, soil care and even studies on the growth and quality of four popular zinnia varieties.

“SDSU Extension wants to empower individuals to reach their gardening goals through providing science-based information. Each person has different pieces of land, resources and goals for their gardens and landscapes,” she said. “We strive to provide them with trusted, research-based information to help them make decisions.”

Walkling said the impact of these volunteers cannot be understated. According to Walkling, there are more than 400 Master Gardeners across the state and 14 Master Gardener clubs. In 2024, these vital volunteers hosted 153 gardening events, including farmers market booths, gardening workshops and demonstrations, reaching nearly 10,000 South Dakotans. Regardless of the event or what is being discussed, Walkling said Master Gardeners carry an infectious love of digging in the dirt.

“These volunteers help get people excited about gardening,” she said. “There are so many volunteer opportunities – teaching youth, teaching adults, maintaining demonstration gardens, answering questions, organizing events, engaging in horticultural research, writing horticulture articles – the sky is the limit.”



SDSU Extension Master Gardeners host an educational booth at the SD State Fair. From left: Lael Abelmann, Sharelle Meyer and Nancy Kadous.



Coteau Prairie Master Gardener Club (Watertown area) hosted the 2024 state conference at Joy Ranch. | Photos courtesy of SDSU Extension.



l to r: Line Workers Robert Feldhaus, Jason Keelin, Stephen LaFreniere and Pat McCarty

Dakota Energy Crews Responded to Call for Help

A powerful blizzard swept through Nebraska on March 19, 2025, causing extensive damage to Burt County Public Power District's (Burt County) transmission and distribution system in Tekamah, Nebraska, with a population of 1,715. The blizzard brought heavy snowfall and fierce winds, plunging the town into a state of emergency and leaving a trail of destruction in its wake. By the morning of March 20, 3,304 of Burt County's 4,226 customers were without power, and much of the district's 2,059 miles of power lines lay in ruins.

Recognizing the severity of the situation, Burt County issued a mutual aid call to the South Dakota Rural Electric Association, seeking urgent assistance. Responding

swiftly, journeyman line workers and equipment from Dakota Energy, Central Electric in Mitchell, Douglas Electric in Armour, Southeastern Electric in Lennox, and Sioux Valley Energy in Colman traveled to Nebraska to aid in power restoration efforts. These dedicated crews worked tirelessly from early morning until late at night, demonstrating extraordinary commitment and teamwork.

The storm wreaked havoc on infrastructure, particularly devastating

east-west power lines, many of which lay across roadways for days. The crews faced significant challenges, including stretches where only one or two poles remained standing over a mile-long distance.



Several three-phase poles snapped off due to the weight of the ice and blowing wind.



DEC bucket truck needed a pull from the mud and snow.



Line workers use bats to hit the ice off the line.

The affected services primarily consisted of acreages and grain farms, which relied heavily on electricity for daily operations.

During the first four days of restoration, all substations remained offline, necessitating the replacement of poles and wires before power could be systematically restored. The crews focused on repairing critical three-phase mainlines, replacing 76 poles, and repairing or straightening 38 others. Despite the grueling conditions, they pressed on with determination, knowing the vital

role their work played in bringing normalcy back to the community.

The unwavering support of the local residents further fueled their efforts. Community members generously provided food, drinks, and words of encouragement. Their kindness and patience deeply moved the workers. As Robert Feldhaus, Dakota Energy Line Foreman noted, “You couldn’t have found a more patient and friendly community.”

After a week of relentless labor, the line workers completed their mission and returned home to

Dakota Energy on Thursday, March 27. Though physically exhausted, they carried with them a sense of accomplishment, knowing they had played a crucial role in restoring power and hope to a storm-ravaged community. Their efforts serve as a testament to the strength of cooperation, the resilience of small-town America, and the unbreakable bond between those who rise to meet adversity head-on.



Line workers climbing a three-phase pole to work on crossarm.



Line workers setting a three-phase pole.



Local, state and federal officials celebrate the ribbon-cutting of the new Lieutenant Commander John C. Waldron Memorial Bridge, March 25, 2025. Photo by Marcy Anderson, Courtesy of the Pierre Area Chamber of Commerce.

BRIDGING HISTORY

The Demolition of the Waldron Memorial Bridge

Frank Turner

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Tons of concrete and steel came crashing down in a planned demolition of the Lt. Cmdr. John C. Waldron Memorial Bridge that connected Pierre and Fort Pierre over a half mile stretch of river. The planned explosion marked a significant historic moment for not only Pierre and Fort Pierre, but also eastern and western South Dakota.

The demolition of the bridge unfolded in seconds. A plume of black smoke erupted from the detonating cord placed at key points in the bridge, quickly followed by a bone-rattling shock wave. Paul Nelson, a recently retired employee of the South Dakota Department of Transportation, witnessed the end of the bridge's 63-year lifespan. Nelson, a member of Oahe Elec-

tric, spent over 40 years with the SDDOT, serving most of that time as the regional bridge engineer. In this role, he was responsible for the maintenance, inspection and upkeep of the very bridge that he saw demolished.

As legacy bridge engineer, this was not Nelson's first experience with such a demolition. "I had actually witnessed the 1986 demolition of the old truss bridge that was just downstream of the current railroad bridge – so I have been around something of this magnitude before," he explained.

Even still, Nelson laughed that the modern demolition had a "pretty good report when it went off."

Although the bridge has been decommissioned, its history endures. In 2002, the bridge was dedicated to Lt. Cmdr. John C.

Waldron, a naval aviator from Fort Pierre who led a torpedo squadron during the Battle of Midway in World War II. His actions proved pivotal in the battle, but led to death of himself and most of his squadron. Of the 30 men who served under his command, only one survived the Battle of Midway.

Waldron's legacy is still commemorated through the new Pierre-Fort Pierre Bridge, which had its ribbon-cutting ceremony last month.

Construction of the new bridge began in 2020, just yards from the old bridge's location. In total, the bridge cost nearly \$50 million and is designed to last a century.

"This bridge is going to be a beautiful and wonderful enhancement to the communities and something that will last more than a hundred years," South Dakota Governor Larry Rhoden said at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new bridge that now connects the two halves of the state.

BRIDGE DEMOLITION



The Lt. Cmdr. John C. Waldron Memorial Bridge comes crashing down at 9:03 a.m., on March 13.
Photos by Frank Turner.





Photo courtesy of the Belle Fourche Police Dept.

PROTECT AND SERVE

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy proclaimed May 15 as National Police Officers Memorial Day and the week as National Police Week.

As we pay special recognition to our law enforcement officers, we want to spotlight some of the selfless work police officers do to better serve communities and make positive impacts in people's lives.

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

In Belle Fourche, it's fun to hang out with the cops.

That's the consensus among fifth graders in the Kids-n-Cops programs when officers from the Belle Fourche Police Department arrive at kids' homes early in the morning to pick them up for an unforgettable Christmas shopping spree.

"We pick up the kids from their houses, drive them around for about a half hour and let them activate the lights and sirens, then we bring them to Runnings and go on a shopping spree for their family," explained Police Chief Ryan Cherveney. "They can buy shopping cart loads of gifts for everyone in their house, and then still buy some gifts for themselves."

The outing continues with games, gift wrapping and a pizza party. At the end of the day, officers drop the kids off at their

homes, leaving behind not only presents but a lasting friendship.

The police department works with the school to target children who may be going through something at home or could otherwise benefit from a friendly acquaintance with some of Belle Fourche's finest.

The program is supported by donations from community – last year, the community sponsored \$500 shopping limits for 16 kids.

Cherveney, who's headed the program for more than a decade, says it's as big of a hit with his officers as it is with the fifth graders.

"It's one of the things every year the officers look forward to," Cherveney explained. "We never have to ask for volunteers because just about everybody volunteers. Even the guys working the overnights come in, do the event, and then

go home and try to get the last two hours of sleep before they come back to work."

Knowing the community members they serve and making a difference in the life of a kid boosts officers' mental health "tremendously," he added.

"It helps keep the officers grounded – they know the people that they're serving and that they're there to protect. [Knowing community members] can help alleviate a really stressful situation into a much more manageable one where we're able to work with people to resolve things."

He continued, "Our main focus is just being out there in the community, helping kids recognize that when we show up to their houses during negative events, we're there because we have a job – it's less scary for the children and they see we're people they can always come to when they need somebody"

The success of the program and the outpouring of community support has led the department to expand their community involvement beyond Christmas shopping, according to Police Administrative Technician Mardi Reeves. The police force also distributed grocery

cards, gift bags, food and blankets to families in need. Reeves estimates a community-wide impact of nearly 200 people in 2024.

Police officers and other first responders also coach little league sports, with plans to soon offer registration fee and equipment “scholarships” so any kid can get involved.

“There are a lot of under-privileged children who can’t be in sports that end up wandering around town with nothing to do and trouble tends to find them,” Reeves said. “Having them participate in a sport really helps with that.”

Chervený says he is grateful for the continued community support that not only makes the Kids-n-Cops program possible, but also creates lasting friendships and memories for kids and their families.

“We had a kid that went shopping with us, and he ended up buying a popcorn popper, oil, butter, cheese, and the different popcorn toppings along with gifts for his other siblings,” Chervený remembered. “The family had never been able to go to a movie – the parents worked rough schedules – so this was the opportunity. The kid bought some movies and a Blu-ray player and the whole purpose was so that they could sit down and watch movies as a family.”

Gregory Police Chief Ryan Cook also believes in the merits of community

involvement. In Gregory, he spearheads multiple community initiatives including the popular bike rodeo.

A partnership between the police department, Avera Health and Gregory’s volunteer ambulance and fire services, the bike rodeo teaches kids – and anyone else interested – the rules of the road for kids on bicycles as well as other safety tips.

“We have volunteers at different stations and the kids go around to each station and participate in whatever event that is,” Cook explained. “One of the stations is helmet sizing and we hand out free helmets, other stations make sure the bicycle chain is lubed up and tight and the different parts are working correctly, and so on.”

The department is involved in other ways, too. For example, the officers work with the post office to ensure children’s letters to Santa Claus are delivered to the North Pole and receive a response.

The involvement is a necessity, explained Cook, because police can’t do their jobs and serve their communities without building relationships first.

“You need to be someone the community trusts,” he said. “You want folks to be comfortable approaching you, knowing there’s an open door, knowing they’re welcome to make the phone call or stop in. And obviously, when our officers are active and out doing stuff, it’s that much easier.”

Women in Law Enforcement



Metzger

Public service knows no gender, and neither does a career in law enforcement. That’s the message South Dakota Highway Patrol

deputy Emily Metzger wants to send to young girls with a passion for public service.

Originally from Kansas, Metzger attended the University of South Dakota in Vermillion to study criminal justice and public administration.

“I wanted to be in law enforcement since I was very young,” Metzger explained. My grandfather was in law enforcement, and in college I worked for the fire department and ambulance and really decided being a first responder was something I wanted to do.”

After college, she attended the police academy training in Pierre, where for 13 weeks she studied everything ranging from traffic stops to defensive tactics to interrogation. Then, another 10 weeks of highway patrol academy and another 10 weeks of field training.

“In South Dakota, the Highway Patrol offers a lot of different things,” Metzger said. “All of our education and training is 100% paid for and they pay your salary while you’re there.”

While the Highway Patrol isn’t exactly brimming with female troopers, Metzger said she’s on the scene to help just like anyone else.

“I have the same expectations as any trooper highway patrol – there’s no special treatment,” she said.

Metzger encourages young women interested in applying to reach out to a local law enforcement officer for more information.



Officer Allan Guinard helps local children with their Christmas shopping. Photo courtesy of the Belle Fourche Police Dept.



The Annual Bike Rodeo. Photo courtesy of the Gregory Police Dept.



MAY 31, JUNE 28, JULY 26
Fort Sisseton Lantern Tour
 Lake City, SD
 605-910-4465

*Photo courtesy of
 Travel South Dakota*

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.

APRIL 27
Country Roads
 2 p.m. Matinee
 Gayville Music Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-760-5799

MAY 2-3
SD Spring Square Dance Festival
 Fri. 7:30-10:30 p.m.
 Sat. 9:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m.
 Faith Lutheran Church
 601 N. Cliff Ave.
 Sioux Falls, SD
 Call for events & times
 605-360-2524

MAY 3-4
Prairie Village Events
 Sat. Consignment Auction
 Sun. Season Opening
 Madison, SD
www.prairievillage.org

MAY 3
West River Pheasants Forever Banquet
 5 p.m. Central Time
 Draper Auditorium
 Draper, SD
 605-516-0143

MAY 3
American Legion Post 15
Just Because It's Time to Dance
 6-10:30 p.m.
 El Riad Shrine
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-336-3470

MAY 3
Rummage & Bake Sale
 8 a.m.-12 p.m.
 5103 Longview Rd.
 Rapid City, SD

MAY 6-7
7th Annual Energize! Exploring Innovative Rural Communities Conference
 Hosted by SDSU Extension
 Community Vitality
 Platte, SD
 605-626-2870

MAY 10
Cinco De Mayo Falls Park Fiesta
 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
 Sioux Falls, SD

MAY 17
Norwegian Independence Day
 Vivian, SD
 605-222-3296

MAY 17
Annual Plant Sale
 9 a.m.-11 a.m.
 Codington Co. Extension Complex
 Watertown, SD
 830-534-5359

MAY 24
Dakota State Fair Speedway
 7 p.m.
 Huron, SD

MAY 31
Auto Parts Swap Meet & Car Show
 8 a.m.-2 p.m.
 Brown County Fairgrounds
 Aberdeen, SD

MAY 31
Miss Prairie Village Pageant
 6:30 p.m.
 Madison, SD
www.prairievillage.org

MAY 31
Hay Country Jamboree
 7 p.m.
 Gayville Music Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-760-5799

JUNE 5
Danish Constitution Day Celebration
 6:15 p.m.-9 p.m.
 Daneville Heritage Museum
 Viborg, SD
 605-766-1312
danevilleheritage.com

JUNE 5
Wheel Jam
 7 p.m.
 Dakota State Fair Speedway
 Huron, SD

JUNE 11
Agricultural Women's Day
 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Agar-Blunt-Onida School
 Onida, SD
 605-769-0013

JUNE 13
Jesse James Days
 Garretson, SD
visitgarretsonsd.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.