

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Hooked on Fishing

**South Dakota Fish
Hatcheries**

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**Methods of
Moving Structures**

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*Photo Credit:
Markus Erk*

2022 Outage Overview



Jesse Sorenson
System Coordinator
jsorenson@bhec.coop

Providing safe and reliable electric service is our mission. Safety is always our number one priority, but reliability is a close second. I presented the 2022 outage summary report to your board of directors during the January board meeting. In 2022, the average percent of time that a service had power was 99.9996%.

Your board of directors takes reliability very seriously. In addition to being involved in and approving the work plans and annual budgets, which set forth the specific reliability improvements to be made, your board of directors receives a monthly outage report. The outage reports specifically identifies the total number of outages, how long each outage lasted, the number of members impacted by each outage, the amount of time each member was without power, and the cause of the outage. Operations and engineering staff use the reports to detect outage trends which help develop plans to mitigate future outages.

Every outage the co-op has is documented and reviewed by the operations and engineering departments to determine if the outage could have been prevented and what actions can be taken so that similar outages in the future can be prevented or shortened. From simple solutions, such as tin wrapped around the base of poles to prevent raccoons and cats from climbing poles, to expensive new substations, overhead to underground line conversions, and SCADA (Supervisory, Control, and Data Acquisition System) operated switches, all help improve reliability.

Reliability improvement is the result of thorough line patrol and tree cutting, improved maintenance, frequent infrastructure testing, inspecting programs, more technical and better equipment, sufficient capacity, and added back feeds and loops from multiple distribution and transmission sources.

Small animals and birds were the greatest cause of individual outages in 2022. Crews continue to install cover-up material on a regular basis to prevent these outages. Lightning caused the second greatest number of outages last year; these outages usually only affect a small number of members. Our system has fuses on all of our transformers and line taps which will blow, preventing larger outages. The third greatest cause of outages in 2022 were those we did ourselves. We had more planned outages for maintenance and construction than we have had in the past three years combined. The outages are for the safety of our employees and the public. Much of our maintenance and construction can be done while the lines are energized. However, due to the location and complexity of the work, it is prudent to de-energize the lines. The reason that the planned outages were significantly higher this year is that a number of upgrades were made to our system that required these outages. Last year we completed upgrades on lines in the Mystic, Fairburn, and Hermosa areas. The Mystic line rebuild consisted of replacing 8.5 miles of overhead line that was first built in the 1940s. We installed new poles and wire with shorter spans. The Fairburn upgrade converted 3.5 miles of single-phase overhead line to a three-phase underground line. In Hermosa, we added another circuit out of the substation and buried almost 7 miles of line. The result of these upgrades will be greater reliability in the future.

Providing reliable electric service is a priority of the co-op and one that we continue to improve on each year. Of the many resources the cooperative allocates to improved reliability, the human resource is what makes it work. Thanks to all of the employees for your commitment to our co-op and your dedication to our mission. You are appreciated.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

BLACK HILLS ELECTRIC

(ISSN No. 1531-104X)

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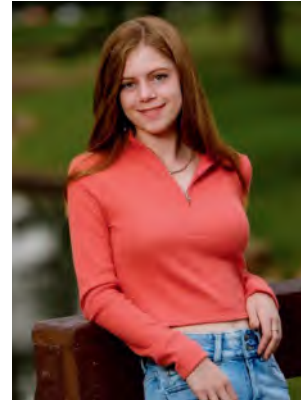
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SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Kaitlynn Wellman, daughter of Stephanie and Jack Wellman, is this year's Black Hills Electric/Basin \$1,000 scholarship winner.

Kaitlynn obtained multiple 4H champion trophies and has an impressive community involvement and volunteerism history.

Kaitlynn plans to attend the University of South Dakota to pursue a major in medical biology and a minor in music.



Congratulations, Kaitlynn!

Community Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 8th @ 10 a.m.
Hermosa Baseball Fields

AGE DIVISIONS:

3 AND UNDER 4 - 7 YEARS OLD 8 - 10 YEARS OLD

**Black Hills
Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

DON'T FORGET TO BRING YOUR EASTER BASKET!

ANNUAL MEETING SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 1ST, 2023

Black Hills Electric Cooperative's Nominating Committee met in late February and placed two candidates to serve as a director from the Lawrence, Meade, and Pennington Counties geographical area on the co-op's board of directors. On the ballot is incumbent Thad Wasson, who has served on your board for almost three years, and nominee Luis del Valle. A complete biography of both candidates will be included in the annual report to be mailed to each member in early May. Members may vote at this year's annual meeting on Thursday, June 1, at the Ramkota Convention Center in Rapid City. Registration begins at 5 p.m.

Practicing Electrical Safety Inside and Outside the Home

Electricity is a vital resource South Dakotans depend on daily, but when used unsafely, the consequences can be costly and sometimes even deadly.

Many tragedies involve common items such as power outlets, appliances, power cords, power equipment and extension cords. Sadly, most of these deaths and injuries are preventable.

To help reduce electric safety casualties and injuries, South Dakota's electric cooperatives are dedicated to raising awareness of electric safety information to educate people of all ages on the dangers of electricity.

Inside the Home:

- Inspect electrical cords often for broken connectors or fraying. Throw away any worn cords to eliminate the possibility of shock, short circuit or fire.
- Don't overload power outlets.
- The wattage of the bulbs you use in your home should match the wattage indicated on the light fixture. Overheated fixtures can lead to a fire.
- When trying to unplug something from an outlet, pull on the plug, not the cord.
- Keep in mind that turned off appliances are still connected to electricity until they are unplugged. Always unplug appliances before cleaning or repairing.
- Use extension cords only for short-term purposes, and make sure the cord is adequately suited for the amount of electricity it will be transferring.
- Turn off and unplug all portable electrical appliances, like hairdryers, irons and shavers, when you're finished using them.
- Be familiar with the location of your breaker box and make sure the switches are clearly labeled so you can shut off electricity quickly in the event of an emergency.
- Teach children never to put their fingers in electrical outlets and appliances.
- Keep appliances and cords away from children and use plug covers in outlets.

Outside the Home:

- If there is a downed power line nearby, leave the area immediately and notify your cooperative or call 911. If others are around, let them know that they need to stay away.
- Teach children to stay away from power lines and substations and make sure they can recognize "Danger-High Voltage" signs.
- Never use electrical equipment near any wet areas, such as pools or ponds.
- Remember, electricity looks for the shortest, most direct path to ground. A ladder, pole or even a wet kite string touching a power line will give electricity a new, shorter path and if you are holding one of these items, you could become a part of that path.
- "Call Before You Dig." Dial 811 before starting a digging project, and workers will be sent to your home to mark utility lines in your yard. This service is free, and it has the potential to save your life.



Power Line Safety

Annette Tschetter, age 9

Annette Tschetter, age 9, offers a great safety tip for power lines. Planting trees near power lines can be dangerous and problematic. Annette is the daughter of Ryan and Elaine Tschetter, members of Whetstone Valley Electric based in Milbank, S.D.

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

SMOOTHIE SENSATION



WAKE UP COFFEE SMOOTHIE

Ingredients:

- 1 cup milk
- 1/8-1/4 cup instant coffee granules
- 1 envelope chocolate or vanilla instant breakfast drink mix
- 3 cups ice cubes

METHOD

In a blender, combine all the ingredients except the ice. Blend until well mixed. Add the ice and blend until well mixed and slushy.

Catherine Peterson
Viborg, S.D.

STRAWBERRY SMOOTHIE

Ingredients:

- 2 cups fresh strawberries, stemmed and halved
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1/2 cup ice cubes or chips
- 1/2 tsp. ground cardamom
- 1/4 tsp. ginger

METHOD

In a blender, combine all of the ingredients. Blend on high speed until it has a smoothie texture. Makes two 12 ounce glasses.

Dar Duncan
Milbank, S.D.

MINT CHOCOLATE BREAKFAST SMOOTHIE

Ingredients:

- 1 cup ice
- 1/2 medium avocado, peeled, pitted and chopped
- 1/2 cup frozen sliced banana
- 1/2 cup packed baby spinach leaves
- 1/2 cup reduced fat milk
- 1 tablespoon agave nectar
- 1/2 teaspoon Pure Vanilla Extract
- 1/4 teaspoon Pure Peppermint Extract
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped chocolate

METHOD

Place all ingredients except chocolate in blender container; cover. Blend on high speed until smooth. Stir in chocolate. Serve immediately.

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 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Easy Behavior Changes to Save Energy



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services
Group

Q: I want to lower my energy use, but I don't know where to start. How can I find out how much energy I use? What are some ways I can save energy without spending a lot of money?

A: You can change your energy use by changing your behavior.

When looking at electric bills, many people focus on the total dollar amount of the bill. When trying to manage your energy costs, I suggest changing your focus to energy use.

While you don't have control over the cost of the energy, you can control how much energy you use.

Set Goals.

Instead of thinking about your bills in terms of dollars, think about them in terms of kilowatt-hours. A kilowatt-hour is the unit of energy used for most electric bills. Review your monthly kWh use to get an idea of how much you use every month.

Once you've reviewed your energy use, set goals for the next month. Try to use less energy than the month before, and check your results on your next bill.

Know When to Use Less Energy.

Some electric utilities offer time-of-use rates, which means electricity costs are dependent on the time of day. This pricing structure more closely reflects the cost to electric utilities and helps consumers understand that energy costs more when the demand for it is higher.

Even if your electric bill does not include time-of-use rates, it can be beneficial to delay energy-intensive chores or tasks to when demand is lower. Peak hours are typically in the morning as we prepare for work and in the evening when we get home and start preparing food and turning on entertainment devices. Doing laundry and running the dishwasher are easy activities to delay until after peak hours.

Power "Off" for Energy Savings.

When looking for energy savings, remember that

"off" is the most efficient setting. Turning off lights is a classic strategy, especially if your lighting is incandescent. Consider switching to energy-saving LED lightbulbs.

Computers and gaming systems can waste energy even when in sleep mode. The higher the wattage and the more hours the device is on, the more energy used. Laptops use the least energy, followed by personal computers at about 200 watts. Gaming consoles typically use less energy than gaming PCs. Don't forget to turn off the monitor as well.

You can lower your energy use even more with smart power strips, which cut power to devices that are not in use. Many electronics continue to draw power even when they are turned off. This could add 5% to 10% to your monthly bill, according to the Department of Energy. Installing smart power strips is an easy way to ensure devices are completely turned off and not drawing power.

Adjust the Temp.

When it comes to lowering your energy use, the settings on your thermostat are another great place to check. Keep in mind, the weather affects your electric bill for heating and air conditioning.

The closer you can keep the indoor temperature to the outdoor temperature, the more you will save. You want to protect your home from damage in extreme heat and cold, but if you can turn the temperature down a few degrees in winter and up in summer, you will save on energy costs.



Ensuring your filters in your heating and cooling system are clean is an easy way to keep your system maintained and operating efficiently. Adding annual servicing by a professional maximizes the efficiency and can lengthen the life of your system.

Understanding your energy use and making small adjustments to your routine will help you reach your energy use goals.



Macie Luce, 2022 Snow Queen, crowns Addison Kuecker as the 2023 South Dakota Snow Queen in January. *Photo credit: South Dakota Snow Queen Festival*

South Dakota Snow Queens Keep Rich History Thriving

Jocelyn Johnson

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It's not your typical pageant. Getting to the top depends on the pageant participant's goals, ambitions, knowledge and talents. Involvement in community and school functions as well as their success in the interview process is how the winning young women are crowned.

The first South Dakota Snow Queen Festival was organized by Aberdeen's Jaycees and Jaycettes after World War II in 1946. From there, it has grown across eastern South Dakota with the hope of even more involvement across state. Today, approximately 30 communities send contestants, and the program has continued to thrive due to the scholarships and former snow queens who advocate for the program.

Scholarships are given to the winners of the festival – Snow Queens receive \$3,500, Junior Snow Queens receive \$2,000, and Snow Princesses are offered \$200 for any school and any program.

Don Bremer, former president of the South Dakota Snow Queen Committee,

said, "Once the festival is over, the winning Snow Queen and Junior Snow Queen begin their year representing South Dakota at various other festivals – including St. Paul Winter Carnival, Minneapolis Aquatennial, Montevideo Fiesta Days, Willmar Fest, Gypsy Days, Bands Brews & BBQs, the Brown County Fair, and more. They represent their communities and the state of South Dakota and build lasting friendships and skills for their future."

The community gathers behind these young women to make the program special and meaningful. It's a tradition full of history and fun for all.

"We even have an important mascot named Frosty," Bremer said. "Frosty is typically a local businessperson who supports the festival...he or she has six guards, and their identity is revealed only at coronation. Notable past Frosty mascots were Joe Foss and Tom Daschle"

Gabriella Premus, weekend morning anchor and live reporter for television news in Green Bay, Wis., was crowned Junior Snow Queen in 2013. She recounted moving to Webster, S.D., from California and



Gov. Kristi Noem was crowned the South Dakota Snow Queen in 1990.

jumping into the program as a way to get acquainted with the community.

"I would definitely recommend this program – it shaped me as a young woman and gave me confidence," Premus said. "I was able to succeed in the profession I am in today as a television news anchor because of the experience I gained as Junior Snow Queen."

"My highlight was being able to represent my state when we traveled and establish comradery with others involved in the program," Premus continued. "I hope the legacy continues."



HOOKED ON FISHING

A Game, Fish and Parks employee consolidates fish in a raceway at McNenny State Fish Hatchery for loading and stocking.

South Dakota Fish Hatcheries Meet Growing Demand

Frank Turner

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Fishing guide Dave Spaid, of Pierre, has a passion for helping anglers pull fish out of South Dakota waters. When a customer catches a memorable monster along the banks of the Missouri River, Spaid knows he has had a successful day.

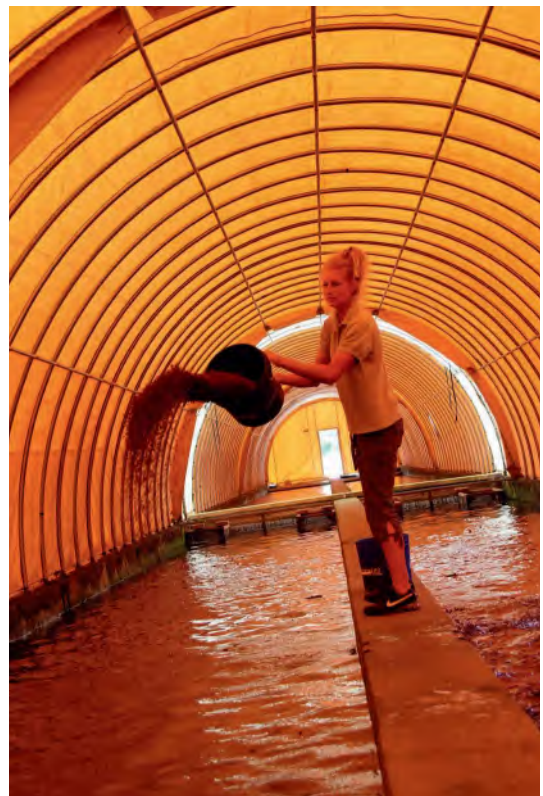
“I basically enjoy watching other people catch fish,” said Spaid, who has been a guide for fishermen from across the Midwest for more than 37 years.

Over the course of his long-standing career, Spaid says he observed more anglers on the water and improved fishing technologies and capabilities, yet fewer sizable fish. “There’s a growing amount of people out there that are fishing every day and having success,” said Spaid. “It puts a detrimental dent in our fishery and sometimes the fish just don’t have a

chance to grow to those bigger sizes.”

According to data from Game, Fish and Parks (GFP), fishing continues to be an important part of South Dakota’s outdoor heritage, confirming Spaid’s suspicions. And while fishing guides, like Spaid, have earned a living by taking fish out of the water, managers of fish hatcheries have taken on the responsibility of putting new fish back in.

Fish Hatcheries administrator Mike Barnes said GFP is being proactive in the development of its three hatchery locations to meet the needs of South Dakota’s anglers. Recent improvements to South Dakota’s three hatcheries located in



Regular feedings help bolster fish before their introduction to South Dakota lakes and rivers.

Spearfish, Rapid City and Waubay have significantly improved the state's abilities to produce and rear mass quantities of fish – everything from walleye to rainbow trout to largemouth bass – for stocking across the state.

The fish produced at these state hatcheries can even bolster South Dakota's larger fisheries, and without them, there would be significantly fewer fish to catch. In 2022, GFP and other entities stocked a total of 66 million fish, including 19 different species, in 138 lakes and streams in South Dakota. Over 60% of the walleye fisheries in South Dakota depend on stocking, and walleye stocking is increasing in Lake Oahe, South Dakota's largest reservoir. Other fisheries, like those for Chinook salmon, rainbow trout, and paddlefish, only exist because of hatcheries.

So how does the state manage to raise millions of fish? When raising walleye, hatcheries collect and fertilize fish eggs collected during the spawning season in the spring. The eggs incubate in upwelling jars, which circulate fresh water and gently roll the eggs. When the eggs hatch,

the small fry are either stocked directly into lakes or kept for further growth in ponds or newly installed re-circulating aquaculture system (RAS) tanks.

Due to the recent addition of RAS technology in 2019, Barnes said it is now possible to grow more fish and different species of fish to sizes never before possible. "Anglers are going to feel a huge impact from what we have done with these new systems, even as soon as this summer," said Barnes. "We are increasing small walleye production, and will be stocking bass at 10 inches or bigger, bluegills at eight inches, and muskies at 16 inches or longer – we've never had the opportunity to grow and stock these species of fish at these sizes before. This is all happening at the same time as increased numbers of walleyes returning from traditional rearing ponds and trout production at record levels. I'm extremely proud of the people I am privileged to supervise."

Rearing fish in RAS is complex, and Barnes compares the process to a factory. The scale of production is massive and energy intensive. Barnes is also the

manager of McNenny Hatchery in rural Lawrence County. As a co-op member of Butte Electric, Barnes said the McNenny hatchery in Spearfish has had consistent support from its local co-op to keep the operation rolling.

"There is no way we could do what we do without reliable electricity," said Barnes. "It's just a tremendous blessing for us to have Butte Electric as our provider. They are just so good to work with and so responsive and helpful."

The state is keen on keeping the momentum rolling. In fact, GFP has plans for a new hatchery facility on SDSU's campus. Increasing production, increasing rearing efficiencies, saving money, developing student interns, and enhancing fisheries education, are all reasons for the new facility. Barnes estimates that the project could be completed within the next three years.

"Keep an eye out for new projects because they are happening and underway," he said. "And at the end of the day, it's all about maximizing the satisfaction of our customers, South Dakota's anglers."



Game, Fish and Parks uses trucks equipped with livewells to stock fish directly into South Dakota fisheries across the state.

LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY



Manager of Operations
Bill Brisk - 33 years



System Coordinator
Jesse Sorenson - 20 years



Foreman
Dean Whitney - 35 years



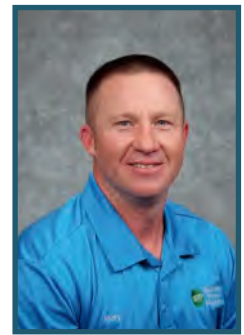
Staking Technician
Lonnie Schryvers - 28 years



Journeyman Lineman
Mark Svoboda - 23 years



Journeyman Lineman
Travis Carlin - 23 years



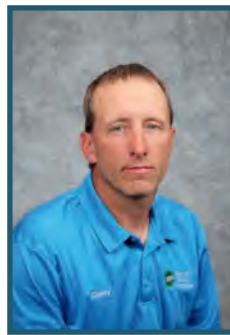
Staking Technician
Rory Halverson - 21 years



Journeyman Lineman
Corey Scott - 18 years



Crew Foreman
Beau Bradeen - 16 years



Journeyman Lineman
Casey Ellerton - 16 years



Journeyman Lineman
Kenny Parker - 15 years



Journeyman Lineman
Danny Dooley - 7 years



Meter Technician
Jeremiah Keller - 5 years



ROW Technician
Scott Schramm - 5 years



Apprentice Lineman
Carlos Rodriguez - 4 years



ROW Technician
Soren Wahlstrom - 4 years



Journeyman Lineman
Max Wilson - 6 months

HERMOSA CONNECTS INC.

Beginning in late 2021, an informal group of Hermosa area residents began discussions on how the members of the community could work together on matters of mutual interest.

The broad consensus was to foster advocacy for the residents, businesses, and visitors in the greater Hermosa community.

To that end, Hermosa Connects, Inc., a non-profit corporation, was established in January of 2023 which shall operate exclusively to advocate for educational, scientific, and charitable purposes.

To fulfill our qualifying purpose, the group has identified the following objectives:

1. Create a community calendar.
2. Advocate and promote various community activities and local businesses.
3. Enhance family, educational, cultural, and economic opportunities in the Hermosa area.
4. Promote a favorable image for the community based on its community-wide activities, local businesses, outstanding schools, cultural events and facilities, and recreational opportunities.
5. Encourage interactions between various organizations, whether religious, social, commercial, or civic.
6. Promote Hermosa as a tourism crossroad point from Rapid City to Mt. Rushmore and the Black Hills (Hwy. 40 W), Custer State Park and Crazy Horse Memorial (Hwy. 36), the Badlands and reservations (Hwy. 40 E), and the National Grasslands and Agate Beds (Hwy. 79 S).
7. Strengthen the special character of needing to be both a recently developing community to Rapid City and Ellsworth and the livelihood of widely spaced ranching families with generational histories in the area.
8. Assist our local governing bodies (Town, County, School Board, Fair Board, etc.) in their respective roles to supply and improve physical infrastructure, educational and recreational facilities, and cultural resources.

At the organizational meeting, the following community members were elected to serve on the Board: Robert Knapp, Dan Martin, Rick Mills, Leo Van SamBeek, and Valena Baker. More information is available on Facebook = Hermosa Connects Inc.



Officers of Hermosa Connects Inc. received a donation from Black Hills Electric Cooperative, matched by Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative. From L-R: Valena Baker, Leo Van SamBeek, Rick Mills, Robert Knapp, Dan Martin, and BHEC's Director of Communications and Member Services, Michelle Fischer.

EGO SNOWBLOWER WINNER



Congratulations to WREA members Thomas and Joyce, who won the Electric snow blower from the South Dakota Rural Electric Association Touchstone Energy Cooperatives booth at the Stock Show!



MOVING STRUCTURES

A home is moved in Fargo, N.D., due to flooding.

Reasons to Move and Methods to Get it Done

Jocelyn Johnson

jocelyn.johnson@sdrea.coop

You found your dreamhouse. It's affordable and everything you ever wanted. The catch? You must move it across town.

It's not an easy thing to do, but moving a complete structure from the past to its future home can be done and is done for the right reasons.

Milbank House Movers, Inc., located in Milbank, S.D., has been in business since 1965 and serves all of South Dakota, North Dakota, and the Mid-Western parts of Minnesota.

Josh Wendland from Milbank House Movers said, "The demand for moving structures remains high across all of our service area...we have multiple crews, that, at times, move multiple houses every week."

A house, sentimental barn or historical

church are all structures that people have moved in South Dakota. Sentiment, safety, time, cost, convenience, and restructuring could all be reasons why this occurs.

Throughout the United States,

intimidating structures are moved regularly – lighthouses, hotels, movie theatres, airport terminals, barges, ships, bridges, grain elevators, houses, libraries, transformers, draglines, and viaducts are a few examples.

"Relocating structures is the world's oldest and largest recycling industry," Wendland stated. "Why people move structures varies greatly, but a few of the most common reasons occur in a



Two buildings are moved from Augustana University campus due to expansion of the college athletics complexes.

vast state like South Dakota. People that would like a home built may have difficulty finding builders that will work in their parts of the state, or the local builders are simply booked out and cannot help in the timeframe that works for them.”

In these circumstances, ready-built companies offer pre-built homes that could be moved to the customer’s site and set it on their basement as if it were built there all along.

A homeowner wanting to upgrade homes in their current location while also wanting to make a profit over the home they currently live in, is another example to move a home. Out with the old and in with the new! This philosophy can be true with barns, buildings, garages, and other types of structures that are in the way of new opportunities, but still hold value.

Flooding is an additional reason why some in the Midwest may want to move their homes to higher ground. Wendland observed that structural movers have seen an increase in the number of requests to elevate houses permanently, so owners

would not have to pay for expensive flood insurance. This move would elevate the long-term value on their home.

“We also work with numerous historical societies to help preserve historic structures, trains, churches, hotels, and schoolhouses by moving them to historical society grounds where they can be saved for future generations to learn from and enjoy,” Wendland stated. “We like to say, Moving the Past to the Present for the Future!”

Things to Consider When Moving a House

Despite professionals making it look somewhat easy, getting from Point A to Point B may not be that simple. It requires constructive planning and forethought. The following are just a few considerations to take before any structure is moved.

1. Size – the bigger the house, the more expensive it is to move.
2. Obstacles – trees, overhead utility lines, bridge weight limitations, traffic signals, and railroad crossings should be considered

with every route taken.

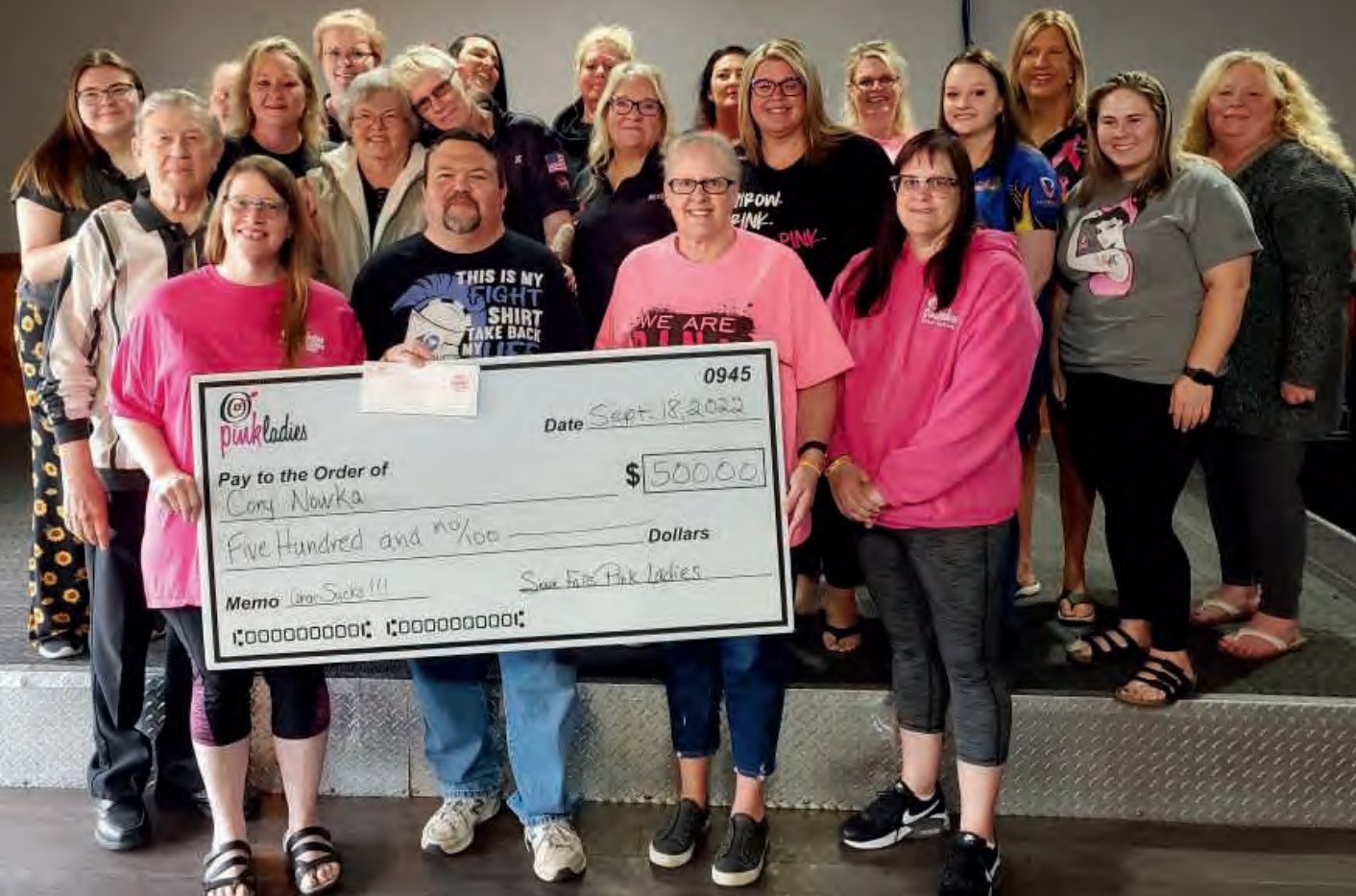
3. Price of moving the house
4. Distance of the move
5. Cost of the new lot
6. Cost to purchase the house or building
7. Fees associated with moving overhead utilities, tree trimming, and any permits or inspections required to move and place the house
8. Fees associated with disconnecting all of the current utilities, HVAC, and electrical and plumbing systems
9. Remodeling costs
10. Financing costs

Moving a structure can be an exciting process if done correctly. It’s saving a piece of history from destruction or putting in something new without the headache of waiting. Whatever the reason behind the move, the ability to do it is astounding. Homes can be saved, history can be preserved, and future options are made more available.



A home is moved due to flooding near Waubay, S.D.

DART LEAGUE



Members of the Sioux Falls Pink Ladies Dart League present a \$500 check to area residents fighting cancer.

PINK LADIES DART LEAGUE Looking to Make a Difference

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sirea.coop

Clad in pink, one nonprofit organization in Sioux Falls is making a difference in their community one dart at a time. The Sioux Falls Pink Ladies Dart League, alongside other Pink Ladies chapters in South Dakota, has a goal to support and raise funds for area community members who are battling cancer and undergoing

treatment.

Although the Pink Ladies Dart League is mostly noncompetitive when it comes to darts, the group is serious in its efforts to assist those fighting cancer. Funds raised by the ladies through league darts and public events regularly help embattled families during their fight with cancer, easing the financial burden of hospital bills, food expenses, gas money or anything else the family might need.

Despite having only 60 members in their chapter, the Sioux Falls Pink Ladies Dart League has significantly impacted their community in the last decade. Through community events, tournaments and league fees, the group has collectively donated more





Even Santa sometimes visits the Sioux Falls Pink Ladies Dart League, gifting presents to families battling cancer.



Sioux Falls Pink Ladies Dart League Logo

than \$130,000 to those impacted by cancer.

“It’s about giving back to our community and giving love and support to cancer patients,” said Sioux Falls Pink Ladies Dart League President Leann Gabel.

When Gabel joined her chapter in 2015, she had no previous experience throwing darts. For her, it was about trying something new, having fun and making a difference.

“It’s about the hearts, not the darts.”

Every year, Pink Ladies chapters from across the state gather in October during cancer awareness month for the Pink Ladies Darts Tournament. Although the sport is a significant component of the Pink Ladies, Gabel emphasized that their goal is about supporting their community. Anyone,

regardless of gender, age or skill, is welcome to join their chapter.

“I came into the chapter never having thrown a dart in my life and I’m still in the lower division when we play tournaments,” said Gabel. “It’s about the hearts, not the darts.”

For Gabel and the rest of the chapter, each donation serves as a reminder of why they participate in the non-profit. Gabel recalled helping a family with five children during Christmas time in 2021.

The dad was struggling with cancer, and while supporting the father and the family, the mother was unable to work. When the family attended one of the chapter’s events, the group gave the family an abundance of gifts, a Hy-vee gift card and cash for the holidays.

“They were so grateful and they started crying and I couldn’t help but cry too,” she said. “I just thought, wow, my heart is full right now. It doesn’t get any better than that, and

with the kind of passion we have in our chapter, you just can’t beat it.”

Charity from The Pink Ladies Darts League goes beyond just the holiday season. The chapter regularly holds fundraising events and supports area families throughout the year. In fact, the chapter’s next benefit event, Kickin’ Cancer Jam, will take place this month on April 16 at the El Riad Shrine in Sioux Falls. The event will feature five different bands and, of course, a dart tournament. All proceeds from the event will go to local families from the Sioux Falls area.

The Sioux Falls Pink Ladies League, however, is not alone in its efforts. Gabel also encouraged people to watch for events around the state and support the Pink Ladies in their mission to support those with cancer.

“People are more than welcome to attend our Kickin’ Cancer Jam,” she said. “It’s all for the community. No one should fight alone.”



April 22, 2023
RiverRat Run
 Gavins Point Recreation Area
 Yankton, SD
 605-660-9483

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.

MARCH 31-APRIL 2
70th Annual Hayes Play:
Trouble in Tumbleweed
 Hayes Community Hall
 Hayes, SD
 605-280-6556

APRIL 1
Hill City Easter Egg Hunt
 9:45 a.m.
 Visitor Information Center
 Hill City, SD
 605-574-2368

APRIL 1
Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt
 10 a.m.
 City Park
 Groton, SD
 605-397-8422

APRIL 1
East Dakota Chapter
NWTF 30th Banquet
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-940-0702

APRIL 2-4
"The Psychic-a Murder
Mystery of Sorts"
Community Theater
Performance
 Town Players Theater
 Watertown, SD
 605-280-6556

APRIL 8
East Dakota Chapter
NWTF 30th Banquet
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-940-0702

APRIL 8
Easter Egg Hunt for Helping
with Horsepower
 2 p.m.
 Reclamation Ranch
 Mitchell, SD

APRIL 21
Museum After Dark
 7 p.m.
 Children's Museum of
 South Dakota
 Brookings, SD

APRIL 21-22
Junkin' Market Days,
Spring Market
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
 Expo Building
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-941-4958

APRIL 22
RiverRat Run
 8 a.m.
 Gavins Point Recreation Area
 Yankton, SD
 (605) 660-9483

APRIL 22
Online Benefit Auction for
Hermosa Arts & History
Association
 Custer, SD
www.hermosahistory.org

MAY 6
Cinco de Mayo Fiesta
 Lake Farley Park
 Milbank, SD
 605-432-6656

MAY 17
Norwegian Independence
Day
 6 p.m.
 Vivian, SD
 605-222-3296

MAY 20
Buggy Museum Open House
 10 a.m.
 Stockholm, SD
 605-938-4192

MAY 27
Back When They Bucked
All-Day Rodeo
 9 a.m.
 Days of '76 Event Complex
 Deadwood, SD
 605-717-7642

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