

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Pick of the Patch

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Lake Oahe**

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Enjoy Fall – and Stay Alert for Cyber Scams

Laura London

Fall is a favorite time of year for many of us in the Lake Region territory. It's harvest season, the beginning of hunting season and a time to pull out the cozy sweaters and enjoy all things pumpkin. For others, it's the beauty of changing leaves, especially around the Sica Hollow area. And for some, it's simply the fun of spooky season.

But there's another reason October is important: it's National Cybersecurity Awareness Month. While you're preparing for trick-or-treaters to arrive at your door, it's also a good time to make sure you're prepared for something far less fun – cyber scams.

At Lake Region Electric, keeping your information and our systems secure is an important part of providing safe, reliable electric service. We work hard to protect the systems that operate the electric grid, as well as the technology and information that help us serve you. This includes online accounts, payment systems, member portals and outage communications.

Unfortunately, scammers are always looking for new ways to take advantage of unsuspecting consumers. One common tactic is impersonating a utility company. Lake Region Electric regularly hears from members who have been targeted by scammers or have had to change their payment methods after their information was compromised.

Today's scammers can be surprisingly convincing. Artificial intelligence (AI) is making it easier for cybercriminals to create realistic emails, text messages, websites and

even voice messages. A scammer may impersonate Lake Region Electric and tell you that your account is past due, your service is about to be disconnected or you need to make immediate payment.

These messages may even include our logo, professional-looking language or a website that appears legitimate. That's why simply looking for spelling errors or other obvious mistakes isn't always enough to identify a scam.

When in doubt, slow down and verify.

If you receive a message that creates a sense of urgency or threatens immediate disconnection, don't click the link, respond to the message or call the phone number provided. Instead, contact Lake Region Electric directly using a trusted phone

number or our official website.

Cyber scams are a growing problem for consumers. According to the Federal Trade Commission, consumers reported losing \$3.5 billion to imposter scams in 2025, making them the most commonly reported type of fraud. Nearly one in three fraud reports involved an imposter scam.

A few extra seconds of caution can save you from a costly mistake. Before providing personal information, clicking a link or making a payment, take a moment to make sure you know who you're communicating with.

This fall, enjoy the harvest, changing leaves, hunting season and all the traditions that make this time of year special. And while you're keeping an eye out for ghosts and goblins, keep an eye out for scammers, too.

Stay safe, stay alert and when something doesn't seem right, verify before you click, call or pay.

DON'T FALL FOR A UTILITY SCAM

The latest utility impersonation scams are increasingly convincing. A scammer may claim Lake Region Electric is about to disconnect your service, then demand immediate payment through an unusual method. If you ever receive an unexpected payment request, pause and verify it. Contact the Lake Region Electric office at 605-345-3379 or 1-800-657-5869 to verify.



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

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Garrett Wurtz & Choni Bullock

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SAFETY IS ALWAYS IN SEASON

Fall hunting is a core memory treasured by many in South Dakota. It's a family and friend tradition that should be kept safe. This is your caring reminder to stay safe and enjoy a great hunt this season.

Simple Safety Rules for All Hunters

- Watch for posted warning signs and stay clear of electrical equipment.
- Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- Know where power lines and equipment are located on the land you hunt.
- Be careful in wooded areas where power lines may not be easy to see.
- Do not place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles; energized lines can shock or kill you.
- Do not place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment; they can block lines and create hazards for crews.

Pheasant hunting often takes place in open fields with hedgerows and grassy strips, while dove hunting centers on fast, aerial crossings across agricultural landscapes. In both scenarios, lines may be hidden by trees or tall grass, especially near field edges and canal banks. Staying alert in these transition zones reduces the risk of an accidental encounter with electrical infrastructure.

Practical Rules for Pheasant and Dove Hunts

- Plan ahead: Check maps or ask landowners where lines and equipment are located.
- Keep a safe distance: Stay away from overhead and buried lines near fields and edges.
- Hunt with a partner: A second person can help spot hazards.
- Speak up about hazards: If you see lines or equipment, treat it as a hazard and avoid the area.
- Follow rules: Respect any posted electrical safety warnings or access restrictions.
- Share safety: Tell fellow hunters and guests about these tips.

Why These Safety Tips Matter

Power lines conduct large amounts of electricity and contact with lines or equipment can cause serious injury or death. Maintaining distance, avoiding contact with poles or lines, and not placing gear on equipment are effective practices that protect you, your hunting partners, and the line workers who keep power on.

Your electric cooperative remains committed to safe hunting. We encourage members to stay informed about local electrical safety rules and to know line locations on the lands they hunt. If you encounter hazards, report them right away so they can be addressed. Sharing these safety practices help create a culture of safety that benefits everyone.



The poster features a green camouflage pattern at the top, followed by a yellow and black diagonal hazard stripe. Below this, a target icon is positioned to the left of the title "Electrical Safety Tips for Hunters". The text below the title reads: "We encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors." A list of six safety tips follows: "Keep clear of electrical equipment.", "Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.", "Know where power lines and equipment are located where you hunt.", "Be vigilant in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.", "Never place deer stands on utility poles.", and "Never place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment."

Electrical Safety Tips for Hunters

We encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.

- Keep clear of electrical equipment.
- Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- Know where power lines and equipment are located where you hunt.
- Be vigilant in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.
- Never place deer stands on utility poles.
- Never place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment.



The drawing is a simple line drawing on a light blue background. It shows a person standing on the ground, holding a string that goes up to a diamond-shaped kite. The kite is positioned near a horizontal line representing a power line. Above the power line, there is a yellow sun and the handwritten text "Don't dig or fly kites by wires!". To the right of the drawing, the text "Don't dig or fly kites by wires!" is written in a bold, brown font.

"Don't dig or fly kites by wires!"

Seth Raak, age 7

Seth cautions readers to not dig or fly kites around power lines. That is great advice, Seth! Thank you! Seth's parents are Nathaniel and Katie Raak, members of Central 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.

Let's Eat CAKE

SWEDISH PANCAKES

Ingredients:

1.5 cups flour, sifted
3 tbsps. sugar
1/2 tsp. salt
3 eggs
2 cups milk
2 tbsps. butter, melted

Method

Sift together flour, sugar and salt. Beat in 3 eggs until thick and piled softly. Beat in milk and butter until blended. Lightly grease griddle with butter. For each pancake, spoon about 1 tbsp. of batter on skillet. Cook over medium heat until lightly brown on each side.

Lois J. Larson
Clay-Union Electric

CREAM CHEESE CUPCAKES

Ingredients:

1 box chocolate cake mix, prepared
1 (8 oz.) package cream cheese
1/3 cup sugar
1 egg
Dash of salt
1 (6 oz.) package chocolate chips
1 can cream cheese frosting

Method

Mix cake mix according to package directions. Fill cupcake liners 1/2 full. mix the cream cheese with the sugar. Beat in egg and salt, then add chocolate chips. Drop a teaspoonful of cream cheese mixture into each cupcake. Bake as directed on package. Frost with cream cheese frosting when cool.

Elaine Rieck
Southeastern Electric

CHOCOLATE ZUCCHINI CAKE

Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
2 tsps. baking soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. espresso powder (optional)
1/2 tsp. salt
1 cup canola or vegetable oil
1 cup granulated sugar
3/4 cup brown sugar, packed
4 large eggs, room temperature
1/3 cup sour cream or Greek yogurt, room temperature
2 tsps. vanilla
3 cups shredded zucchini (about 3 medium)
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Method

Preheat oven to 350 °F. Grease two 9x2 inch cake pans (make sure they're at least 2 inches high or one bundt pan). Whisk the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder, espresso powder (if using) and salt together in a large bowl. In another large bowl using a handheld or stand mixer, beat the oil, granulated sugar, brown sugar, eggs, sour cream, vanilla and zucchini together until combined. Pour dry ingredients into the wet ingredients and beat on medium speed until completely combined. Beat in chocolate chips. Batter will be thick. Pour batter evenly into cake pans. Bake for around 25-32 minutes for round pans; 45 minutes for bundt pans or 9x13 pan; 18-22 minutes for cupcakes (24-30 cupcakes). To test doneness, insert a toothpick into the center of cake. If it comes out clean, it is done.

Ginny Jensen
Sioux Valley Energy

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.

RECIPE CORRECTION THE BEST APPLE CRISP

Ingredients:

6 cups sliced apples
1 1/2 cups white sugar
1 tsp. cinnamon
6 tbsps. flour

Topping (makes enough for two pans)

2 cups flour
2 cups brown sugar
2 cups soft butter
1 tsp. baking powder
3 cups oatmeal

Method

Mix ingredients in a bowl and place in a 9x12 glass baking dish. Mix topping ingredients together until crumbly and sprinkle over apple mixture. Don't pack. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour or until apples are done.

Ginny Jensen
Sioux Valley Energy

ATTENTION: High School Juniors and Seniors



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- Learn about government, cooperative principles and rural electrification.

Contact Lake Region Electric for more information and an application!



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LAKE REGION
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Applications must be submitted no later than December 1, 2026.

THE WORLD'S LARGEST PHEASANT

Co-op Director Recalls Fixing Up Huron Landmark

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

In east-central South Dakota, a roadside monument pays homage to one of the region's largest economic drivers: the ring-necked pheasant.

Towering 40 feet above U.S. Highway 14, the "World's Largest Pheasant" has watched over Huron since 1959, when it was built to welcome pheasant hunters to the James River Valley.

In the nearly 70 years since the pheasant was first perched at the Dakota Inn, it has become a South Dakota landmark, attracting visitors from across the country.



Schaun Schnathorst

"It's iconic," explained Schaun Schnathorst, assistant engineer for the City of Huron and director for Dakota Energy Cooperative. "It's in travel guides; it's definitely a destination spot. There's always people stopping to take photos of it."

Schnathorst witnessed the bird's popularity firsthand in 2011, when he and his brother, Bob Carlson, were commissioned to restore the gargantuan fiberglass pheasant to its 1950s glory.

"The thing is 28 feet tall, and it's on top of a 12-foot-tall building, so it's 40 feet tall at the very top of the pheasant's head," Schnathorst said. "For a guy hanging out [of the basket of a bucket truck] with a paint gun trying to paint stuff, it wasn't very fun. There were times I had to open the door of the basket and pretty much lay on the bottom and paint."

The pheasant's survival through nearly seven decades of South Dakota weather is a testament to its construction. Its body was built with steel mesh welded to supports, while massive steel rods inside its legs extend deep into the ground to keep it upright in the wind.

"It got hit by lightning at some point in time, and when I went to restore its head, it had a giant chunk of concrete blown out of it," Schnathorst recalled.

The weeks-long restoration presented several other challenges.

"Way back in the day ... people would go by during hunting season and shoot it with a shotgun when they were drunk in the middle of the night," Schnathorst continued. "There were three arrows sticking out of it."



An access door beneath the pheasant had also allowed area pigeons to shelter inside for years, turning the roadside sculpture into their own avian temple.

"The fecal matter was rotting out the bottom of the fiberglass," Schnathorst said, recalling the dismal condition inside the bird.

Luckily, the damage was repairable. Schnathorst installed a one-way door to evict the squatting pigeons and replaced several sections of fiberglass.

When it came time to paint, Schnathorst said the bird's back was the hardest area to reach from his lift, requiring constant repositioning and leaning out of the lift's basket.

"You just really couldn't get that close to it," he said. "But the scariest part is the head. When there's any kind of wind at all, it's moving and you're moving too, and it isn't always at the same pace!"

Schnathorst's work on larger-than-life animals extends beyond Huron's giant pheasant, having repainted Prostrullo Auto Mall's iconic bison statues at the dealerships in Huron and Madison.

"I had two car trailers, one statue on each trailer," he chuckled. "That was really cool living out in the country and having these two giant buffaloes in my yard. It was quite a conversation starter until we got them done!"

MORE PHEASANT FACTS

- The pheasant is 28 feet tall (on a 12-foot-tall roof) and measures 40 feet long from its beak to tail.
- The pheasant weighs more than 22 tons.
- Sculptor RF Jacobs of Gooding, Idaho, constructed the pheasant at a cost of about \$23,000.
- The pheasant was dedicated October 18, 1959, and christened by South Dakota Gov. Joe Foss.
- Other South Dakota communities including Gregory, Redfield, Brookings, and Chamberlain also host their own larger-than-life pheasants.



PICK OF THE PATCH

Frank Turner

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South Dakota Pumpkin Patches Offer Plenty of Reasons to Get Outside this Fall

Cooler air, changing leaves and the search for the perfect pumpkin all mark the arrival of the autumn season. Across South Dakota, fall weekends bring families to farms and orchards for corn mazes, apple picking and hayrides.

But putting together a few weeks of fall fun takes months of work behind the scenes.

Pumpkin patches and orchards are preparing to welcome visitors for another season of pumpkins, games and family traditions.

Country Apple Orchard – Harrisburg, S.D.

By the time visitors arrive at Country Apple Orchard near Harrisburg, owner Greg Jones and his crew have already brought in three semi loads of straw bales and about 6,000 bushels of corn.

It's all part of preparing for a fall season

that lasts just a couple of months but requires work throughout the year.

"The property is kind of a full-time, year-round job," Jones said.

The orchard has been around for more than 30 years, and Jones is six years into owning the operation. Since taking over, he has expanded the pumpkin patches and added many of the attractions that now make up the orchard's fall festival.

The season opens Sept. 4 and runs through October, beginning with apple picking in September before pumpkins take center stage in October. Weekend festivities include zip lines, apple cannons, hay bale mazes, corn mazes, corn pits and, new this year, fresh-cut flowers.

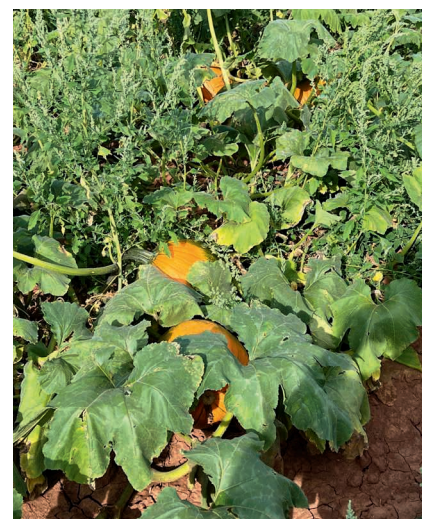
Country Apple Orchard is also a member of Southeastern Electric Cooperative, which helps power the operation through the busy fall season. Keeping everything running takes about

Lucas Hartshorn, owner of Lil' Harvester's Pumpkin Patch, and his family opening the patch for last year's fall season.
Photo submitted by Lucas Hartshorn

60 seasonal employees. Once the crowds disappear, that workforce drops to Jones and one other worker.

The effort appears to keep families coming back.

"They love coming out and they come out multiple times," Jones said, adding that some families with season passes



Pumpkins grow in the field at Lil' Harvester's Pumpkin Patch near Rapid City.
Photo submitted by Lucas Hartshorn

return nearly every weekend throughout the season.

Mazing Acres – Yankton, S.D.

What started as a small family project has grown into roughly 35 acres of fall festivities outside Yankton.

Scott and Molly Nedved opened Mazing Acres with their family in 2020. At the time, the idea was to create a small hobby farm that could teach their children the value of hard work while giving the community something new to enjoy.

“It’s grown more than we thought it would,” Molly laughed.

Today, Mazing Acres, a member of Bon Homme Yankton Electric Association, includes six acres of pumpkins, a five-acre corn maze, a flower patch and several attractions. Visitors can take a hayrack ride, watch pig races, play in the corn pit or try the apple cannons.

The corn maze, sponsored by First Dakota National Bank, changes design each year. For 2026, the design celebrates the nation’s 250th anniversary.

Although the festival lasts only several weekends, planning starts almost as soon as the previous season ends. The family reviews what worked, attends industry



A family poses for a photo in the giant pumpkin chair at Mazing Acres.

Photo submitted by Molly Nedved

conferences and selects the next year’s pumpkin varieties in late fall. By August, Scott said preparing the farm becomes “an all-day affair every day until we open.”

Visitors will notice a few changes this year. Saturday hours are being extended until 8 p.m., allowing families to experience the farm after dark, and a new tiny-town area will feature themed playhouses for younger children.

Mazing Acres opens Sept. 19 and runs through Halloween.

“We want to be something for every age,” Molly said. “Not just for the kids.”

Lil’ Harvester’s Pumpkin Patch – Rapid City, S.D.

At Lil’ Harvester’s Pumpkin Patch south of Rapid City, the Hartshorn family’s fall tradition started in 2013 with pumpkins planted by hand.

Since then, owner Lucas Hartshorn said the patch has grown to about 11 acres.

Hartshorn started the pumpkin patch with his parents, Lyle and Donna, after his father retired. The family wanted a way to keep farming while creating an event they could enjoy with their children.

“We were looking for something to do with the kids in the fall,” Hartshorn said.

At the time, pumpkin patches were harder to find around Rapid City. After

visiting one themselves, the family decided they could create a similar experience on their own farm.

Each year brought something new. Planting pumpkins by hand eventually gave way to a planter, while the patch grew to include a petting zoo, bounce houses, wagon rides, a sandbox and other activities.

Lil’ Harvester’s, a member of Black Hills Electric Cooperative, also opens during the week for school field trips, where students get a closer look at agriculture. Hartshorn said demonstrations may focus on pumpkins or the differences between sweet corn, field corn and popcorn, including how each is grown. For Hartshorn, that mix of farming, education and family time remains at the heart of the patch.

“They get to come out to the farm and learn something,” Hartshorn said.

Across South Dakota, there are several more pumpkin patches and fall festivities similar to those put on by Country Apple Orchard, Mazing Acres and Lil’ Harvester’s Pumpkin Patch. Whether it’s a small hobby farm or a dedicated agritourism operation, each one offers its own take on fall traditions that continue to draw families back year after year.



Visitors of all ages can find something to enjoy at Mazing Acres near Yankton, including the farm’s giant slides.

Photo submitted by Molly Nedved

Lake Region Electric Urges Residents to Power Up Their Devices with Fire Safety in Mind

The theme for Fire Prevention Week™, October 4–10, 2026, is “Charge into Fire Safety: Safe Charging Is a Superpower.”

Lake Region Electric is teaming up with the National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®) to support Fire Prevention Week. This year's FPW theme, “Charge into Fire Safety: Safe Charging Is a Superpower,” focuses on the simple steps people can take to recharge safely. Safe charging means making smart choices every time you plug in.

Many devices used in our daily lives – phones, tablets, laptops, tools, toys, e-bikes and scooters – run on rechargeable lithium-ion batteries, which store a lot of energy in a small space. If they are damaged or charged the wrong way, they can overheat, start a fire, or even explode.

“The way you charge your lithium-ion battery devices can make a difference in helping prevent home fires,” says the NFPA. “It comes down to using simple habits each time you plug in.”

- Use the cord and charger that came with your device or one approved by the manufacturer. Using the wrong charger can damage the battery and increase the risk of fire.
- Charge devices on a table, desk, or other hard, flat surface. Do not charge them on beds, couches, or under pillows. Devices and chargers produce heat during normal charging. Soft surfaces can trap heat and block airflow, which can cause the battery to overheat
- Stop using your device if it feels very hot, starts to swell, is smoking, or has a strange smell. These are warning signs



that the battery may be damaged or failing.

- Unplug your device when it is fully charged. Do not leave it plugged in longer than needed. Leaving a device plugged in too long can increase heat and stress on the battery.
- Charge larger items like e-bikes, scooters, and power tools outside and away from exits. These batteries are larger and store more energy. If they fail, fires can grow quickly and spread.
- When on a plane, keep your device where you can see it while charging. Do not charge devices in overhead compartments. Do not charge e-cigarettes or vapes on a plane. If a battery overheats or fails, it is important for the flight crew to respond quickly.

To learn more about lithium-ion battery safety, visit fpw.org.



Concern for Community

Leonard Deibert, Material Clerk for Lake Region Electric, embodies the co-op principles. As a volunteer firefighter, he spends countless hours making sure our homes and communities are protected and educating the public, including our youngest members. Leonard is pictured above with Brady Bremmon, son of Zac & Sarah Bremmon, at Webster's National Night Out.

DURING HARVEST: KNOW AND TEACH ELECTRICAL SAFETY ON THE FARM

From Dump Truck Driver to Teenager, Everyone Should be Aware of Potential Electrical Hazards

Harvest means long hours, increased stress and tight schedules. Because of that, Safe Electricity reminds farmers that it only takes a split second for someone to come into contact with electricity. From your most seasoned worker to your least, possibly your spouse, son, daughter or a worker applying a load of fertilizer – every person on your farm is at risk of being injured or killed due to electrical contact. “Review overhead power line locations and height clearance with anyone and everyone working on the farm or doing business there,” says Erin Hollinshead, executive director of Safe Electricity. “Although harvest is filled with tight deadlines and heightened work stress, making time for safety, including electrical safety, can save lives.”

To help keep those who work or do business on your farm safe not only during harvest but year-round, follow these electrical safety tips:

- Educate everyone that potential electrical hazards include both direct and indirect contact with an overhead power line or pole. Indirect contact (coming too close to a power line or pole), could cause electricity to arc/jump.
- Both direct and indirect contact can change electricity’s path to ground. Once that path changes, the stray voltage can energize anything in its path, such as a truck, a tractor, an extension, the ground, or a person.
- Start every workday with a safety meeting. Discuss all operations for the day and review power line/pole locations. Emphasize safety above speed to everyone on the farm, especially during busy seasons like harvest.
- Never assume that because someone grew up on the farm that they understand the potential of stray voltage or other electrical hazards. In fact, do not assume this for anyone. For example, teens who have moved irrigation pipes to free an animal have been seriously hurt or electrocuted.
- Encourage drivers and operators to position grain augers in their lowest position or to lower truck bed boxes before moving. Be especially cautious of overhead lines when using augers in the field to load trucks on the road.



- Review potential hazards with grain/dump truck drivers and spot them when possible. Also:
 - Encourage drivers to load and unload all materials away from overhead power lines.
 - Even better, create a dedicated drop zone away from all overhead power lines.
 - Post 10-foot clearance rule and “look up and look out” reminders.
- If you see that a hydraulic truck bed, extensions or other equipment contacts a power line, utility pole or guy wire, instruct the driver to stay in the cab. Call 9-1-1 to have your electric cooperative or utility dispatched to de-energize the power. Give instructions from 50 feet away and inform everyone else to stay back.
- Know how to instruct someone to properly exit a cab if necessary due to fire (do so from at least 50 feet away). The person should cross their arms close to their chest and make a solid jump out of the cab. Then, the person should make deliberate hops, with feet together, hopping away as far as they can. When people walk or run in an area with stray voltage, they could be exposed to two different voltages at the same time and become electricity’s path to ground. This is known as step potential.
- Encourage folding and unfolding to be done well into the field, not at the field’s edge, which could have power lines running next to it.
- Do not store irrigation pipes, hay bales, machinery or anything else under power lines.
- Be aware of power line locations in the proximity of grain bins. Always load and unload on the side without a power line. Contact your electric cooperative or utility with questions about grain bin power line clearance/OSHA regulations.

Contact Lake Region Electric about damaged or downed power lines or poles. Learn more at safeelectricity.org.



LOST BENEATH OAHE

The Rise, Fall and Disappearance of a South Dakota Ghost Town

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Beneath the waves of Lake Oahe lies more than dead trees and walleye. Just below the surface near Akaska sit the remnants of LeBeau, an early 1900s railroad town once filled with immense promise and prosperity, whose story is worthy of its own Wild West feature film.

For years, Caroline Thorsen has collected the history of her great-grandfather, Antoine Le Beau, and the town that bore his name. Through Thorsen's collection and research by railroad historian Don Hofsommer in "A Promise Broken: LeBeau and the Railroad," we can dive beneath the waters of Lake Oahe and dredge up the story of LeBeau's dramatic rise and fall.

A French Fur Trader

The story of the ghost town of LeBeau begins with Antoine Le Beau Sr., a French fur trader whose journey in the mid-1800s took him from France to Quebec, Canada, then to St. Louis, Missouri and eventually up the Missouri River to what is now South Dakota.

"As I unfortunately did not know [Antoine], I hope he is remembered as being a brave gentleman who crossed the ocean from France to come to America and eventually become friends with the Native Americans, married in Native Tradition," said Thorsen, Le Beau's great-granddaughter.

The woman Antoine married was Mary Little Thunder, a member of the Two Kettle Band of Sioux. Antoine himself was later one of several Frenchmen adopted

into the Sioux Tribe at a Great Sioux Council, where he was given the name "Ogless," or "Red Shirt."

Le Beau worked with the American Fur Company before establishing a trading post along the Missouri River near present-day Akaska. The post became the foundation of a small town that would eventually bear his name and become a brief, yet bright, gateway to the West.

The Railroad

By the time the railroad arrived, Antoine Le Beau Sr. was gone, but the town was quickly gaining the reputation of a small metropolis. In 1907, the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railway (M&StL) reached LeBeau, connecting the small Missouri River settlement to Watertown and markets farther east.

"As LeBeau prospered, so did the M&StL's westernmost extension; as LeBeau withered, so did its railroad," Hofsommer writes.

Cattle companies from Texas had taken notice of both LeBeau and the grasslands west of the Missouri. Once they learned cattle thrived west of the river, they began moving large herds into the region. Through its railroad, LeBeau offered those ranchers a new route to market.

The next trick was getting the cattle across the river. On the west side of the Missouri, large holding pens could accommodate as many as 3,500 animals. From there, cattle crossed the river aboard the Scotty Philip, a steam-powered ferry. Once across, they could be loaded directly onto eastbound rail cars.

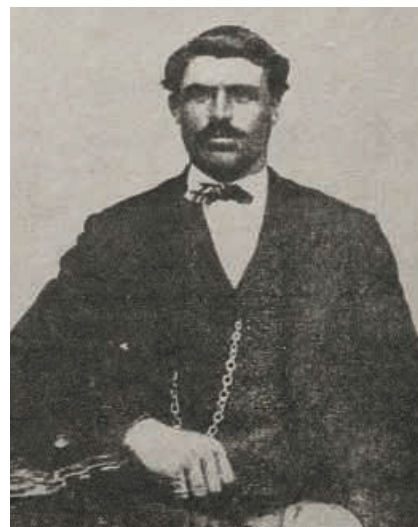
The mouth of Swan Creek on Lake Oahe where the ghost town of LeBeau resides under the waves. *Photo by Frank Turner*

In 1908, roughly 24,000 cattle passed through LeBeau on their way to and from the West River ranges, representing about \$1 million in livestock at the time. The feat helped cement the town's place as a major cattle-shipping point on the Missouri.

A Bustling Town

By the end of the season, LeBeau featured two banks, a newspaper, a drugstore, a general store and a local saloon. The growing town also boasted two lumberyards, a grain elevator and a livery, along with prominent businesses like the Idle Hour billiard and pool parlor, the Hotel LeBeau and Arcade Hotel. For entertainment, residents could even catch a show at Zimmer's Opera House.

As the town grew, M&StL officials planned to continue the rail line west of the



French fur trapper Antoine Le Beau Sr.
Photo submitted by Caroline Thorsen

Missouri by building a bridge across the Missouri, hinting at a long expansion all the way to the West Coast. The excitement only reinforced the idea that LeBeau was destined to become the gate to the west.

The buzz captured the attention of Murdo MacKenzie, general manager of the Matador Land and Cattle Company, and his wealthy son, Dode. Described as a likable and fine young man – while sober – Dode moved to LeBeau in his early 20s to oversee Matador's South Dakota operations.

A Questionable Killing

At the end of the 1909 shipping season, Dode MacKenzie began frequenting LeBeau's saloons. On Dec. 11, he was shot and killed by Bud Stephens, who was tending the bar that morning at Phil DuFran's saloon.

Local accounts of what happened that day – and of Dode MacKenzie's character – differ greatly. One local official described MacKenzie as a stand-up individual, while another local woman said he was known to shoot behind the heels of women in the town when "spirits took him."

Exactly what happened on Dec. 11 will never be known, but according to the version later presented by Stephens' defense at trial, MacKenzie became furious when Stephens failed to hear him order a drink. Rebuffed, MacKenzie crossed the street to purchase what he believed were



The paddle-wheeler Scotty Philip loads cattle at LeBeau, S.D., to be fattened on grasslands west of the Missouri River. For about three years, LeBeau was one of the Northwest's most important cattle-shipping towns.

Photo courtesy of the South Dakota Historical Society

.45-caliber shells, loaded his gun, walked back, pointed it at Stephens and pulled the trigger twice. As the story goes, MacKenzie had accidentally purchased .38-caliber shells, which failed to fire and instead plopped onto the floor. It was then that Stephens reached for his gun and began firing, killing the young MacKenzie.

A Dying Town

The trial resulted in Stephens' acquittal, drawing the ire of Dode MacKenzie's father and the Matador Cattle Company. The company effectively boycotted LeBeau, and no Matador cattle ever entered the town again.

Within months of the trial, a suspicious fire made matters worse. Although fires weren't uncommon in the Wild West, townsfolk discovered that the fire hose, telephone and telegraph lines had all been cut prior to the fire. No arsonist was ever caught.

The bad luck didn't stop there. A competing rail line to the north completed a bridge across the Missouri at Mobridge, undercutting LeBeau's stream of West River cattle. By 1924, M&StL abandoned the town, tearing out its segment of rail line. Within a year, the post office closed.

Beneath Lake Oahe

LeBeau had been a ghost town for decades when Lake Oahe came for what was left.

Construction of Oahe Dam near Pierre began in 1948 as part of a massive federal effort to control flooding and generate hydroelectric power along the Missouri River. In August 1958, the river was closed at the dam and the newly created reservoir began to fill.

As the water rose, it eventually covered the old LeBeau townsite near the mouth of Swan Creek. The empty foundations, cellar holes and remnants of the once-bustling railroad town disappeared beneath Lake Oahe. Unlike most ghost towns in South Dakota that faded away with time, LeBeau vanished beneath the Missouri.



A crowd gathers around a band near the railroad in LeBeau, S.D., with the depot and Missouri River visible in the distance. About a year after this photo was taken, the town installed 10-foot-wide concrete sidewalks along Main Street.

Photo courtesy of the South Dakota Historical Society.

CELEBRATING THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE

National Co-op Month is a reminder of our commitment to members, communities, and the cooperative principles that guide us.



Jeremy Lindemann
CEO/GM

Greetings, Lake Region members!

October is National Co-op Month, a time to celebrate what makes cooperatives different and why that difference matters. As a rural electric cooperative, Lake Region Electric is not-for-profit and member-owned. That means our focus is not on generating profits for outside investors. Instead, we exist to provide reliable, affordable electricity and exceptional service to you, our member-owners. While we must operate responsibly and maintain a strong financial position to meet our obligations each year, any excess margins we earn are returned to you, our member-owners in the form of patronage.

The employees of Lake Region Electric work hard every day to serve our members and communities, guided by the Cooperative Principles that continue to serve as our compass. As we celebrate Co-op Month, it is worth taking a moment to reflect on these founding principles and the role they play in how we serve you.



Open & Voluntary Membership

Membership in Lake Region Electric Association is open to all who can reasonably use our service. We have proudly served power to generations of families, farmers, and businesses for 85 years.

Principle 1: Open and Voluntary Membership

Membership in a cooperative is open to all people who can reasonably use its services and are willing to accept the responsibilities of membership.



Democratic Member Control

Lake Region Electric is run by our members. Directors are all member-owners of the cooperative, elected at the annual meeting where each primary member has a vote. Directors work to set policies and make decisions in the best interest of all member-owners of Lake Region Electric Association.

Principle 2: Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Representatives, including directors, are elected from among the membership and are accountable to the members. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights: one member, one vote.

Principle 3: Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate



Member Economic Participation

surpluses to develop the cooperative, set up reserves, benefit members in proportion to their use of the cooperative, and support other activities approved by the membership.

Principle 4: Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. When they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that maintain democratic member control and preserve their cooperative identity.



Autonomy & Independence

Principle 5: Education, Training, and Information

Education and training for members, elected representatives, directors, managers, and employees help them contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. Sharing information about the nature and benefits of cooperatives also helps strengthen public understanding.



Education, Training & Information

Principle 6: Cooperation Among Cooperatives

By working together through local, regional, national, and international organizations, cooperatives improve services,



Cooperation Among Cooperatives

strengthen local economies, and respond more effectively to member and community needs.

Principle 7: Concern for Community

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies supported by the membership.

Of these seven cooperative principles, I am especially proud of Lake Region Electric's commitment to number seven: Concern for Community.

Lake Region Electric supports local charities, and our employees give their time and talents throughout the communities we serve. You will find them coaching youth sports, serving as firefighters, participating in church organizations, and contributing to local government and civic groups.



Concern for Community

Lake Region Electric supports our communities in many ways. One way is by putting on safety demonstrations for different groups, including local first responders.

I am immensely proud of the employees at Lake Region Electric. They are dedicated to this cooperative, to our members, and to the communities we all call home. They live out the cooperative principles every day, and as always, they will keep the lights on for you!

Until next time,
Jeremy Lindemann
CEO/General Manager



OCT. 31
Yankton's Harvest Halloween
 Yankton, SD
www.harvesthalloween.com

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.

OCT. 2-3
Public Ghost Investigation
 Fort Sisseton State Park
 Langford, SD
 605-910-4465

OCT. 2-3
Pumpkin Festival
 Vendor Fair & Lighted Parade
 Webster, SD
 605-345-4668
wac@webstersd.com

OCT. 3
Pumpkin Train/ SoDak Vendor Showcase
 Prairie Village
 Madison, SD

OCT. 3
Fall Harvest Farmers Market
 9 a.m.
 Centennial Park
 Hot Springs, SD

OCT. 3-4
The Black Market
 Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.,
 Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Bldg.
 Sioux Falls, SD

OCT. 4
St. Anthony's Fall Bazaar
 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Swiss Steak 12-1:30 p.m.
 Hoven, SD

OCT. 10
Tabor Church Quilt & Craft Auction
 Sandwich & Pie Supper
 620 E. Hwy. 12
 Webster, SD
 605-880-3377

OCT. 16
Eureka Chamber Open House
 1:30-3:30 p.m.
 707 G Ave.
 Eureka, SD
 605-230-1777

OCT. 16-17
Haunted Fort
 Sat: Trick or Treat
 Fort Sisseton State Park
 Langford, SD
 605-910-4465

OCT. 17
Faulkton Area Arts Council Craft Fair
 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Faulkton School
 Faulkton, SD
 605-380-8444

OCT. 30
Downtown Trunk or Treat
 Groton, SD
 605-397-8422

OCT. 31
Treat Street
 Main Street
 Milbank, SD

OCT. 31
Webster Chamber Trunk or Treat
 Webster Armory
 Webster, SD
 605-345-4668
wac@webstersd.com

OCT. 31
Lantern Tour
 Fort Sisseton State Park
 Langford, SD
 605-910-4465

OCT. 31
Britton Action Club Trunk or Treat
 Benefitting Marshall County Food Pantry
 5:30-7 p.m.
 Britton Event Center
 Britton, SD
 605-622-0431

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

NOV. 14
Kick-Off to Christmas & Santa Shop
 10 a.m.-2:45 p.m.
 7 p.m. Parade
 Eureka, SD
 605-230-1777

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.