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THE RED BARN Dawson Faith Farms

BY SAMANTHA VANGSNESS

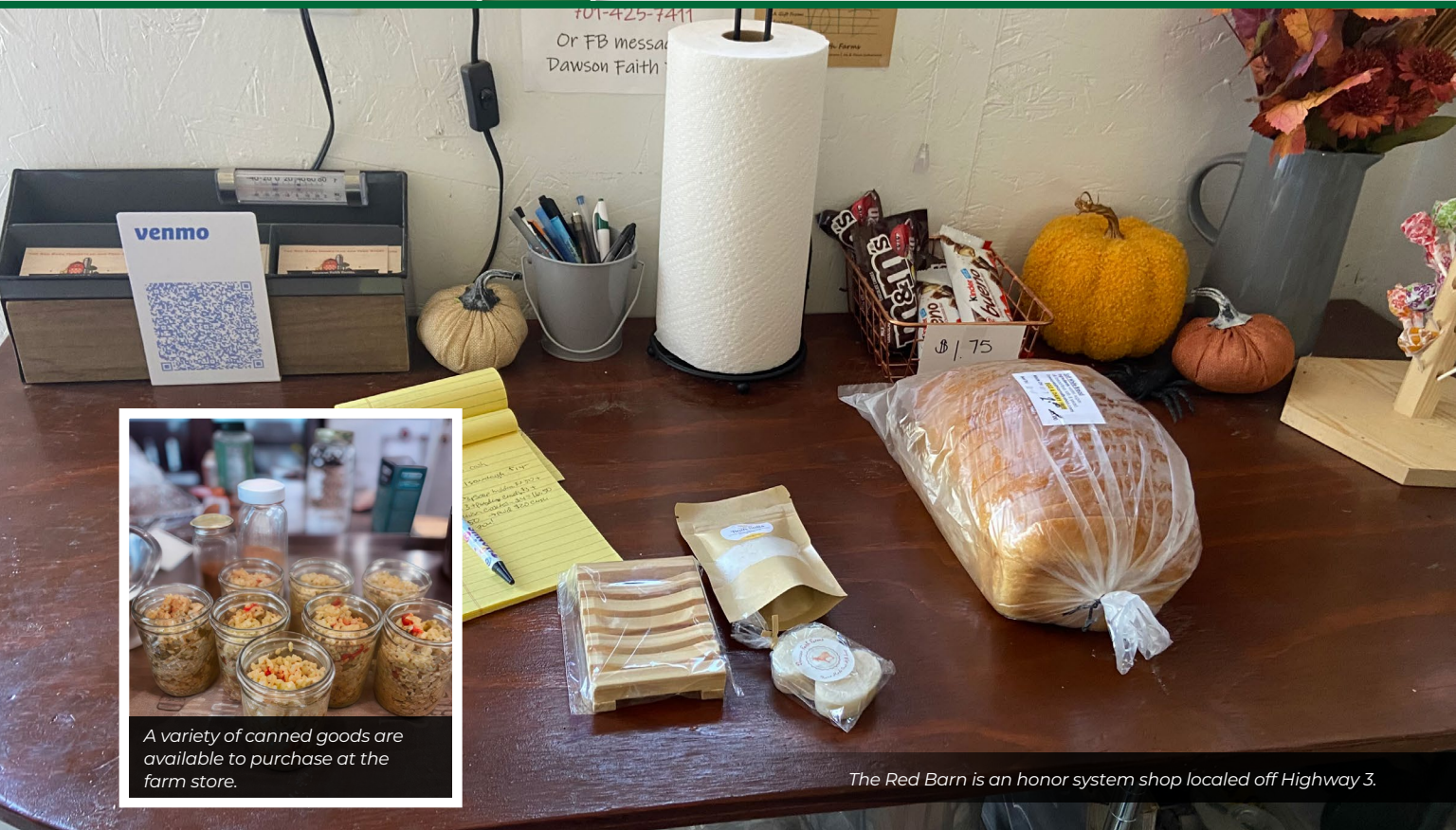
On a farm in Dawson, a red barn at the end of Joe and Dawn Sutherland's lane has become a community destination. It is more than a place to buy eggs, baked goods, garden produce and other homemade items. It's the product of a busy family life, a love for baking from scratch and an idea that grew far beyond what was expected. What started as a small honor-system shop has become a trusted stop for neighbors, lake visitors and travelers looking for something homemade, local and personal.

Life at Dawson Faith Farms

Joe and Dawn planted their roots in North Dakota in 2010 and moved to their 70-acre farmstead in Dawson a few years later. On their farm, five of their nine children, chickens, sheep, goats and a plentiful garden that help guide the farmstand at the end of their driveway.

The Sutherland's journey to bring fresh farm products to customers began with selling eggs, baked goods and produce at local farmers markets in 2016. As their children grew and their daily routines became busier, they knew they needed to shift.

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The Red Barn

With Joe's carpentry skills and Dawn's love for baking, they worked together to develop a plan to draw local community members and visitors from afar.

"It would be so neat if we could just sell a few little things instead of going up to the farmers market," Dawn says was the initial idea. "We just started putting a few things out with an honor system."

The business has grown from one mini fridge and a table in a garden shed to a larger shed with much more inventory.

"It went from a table and one mini fridge and a bucket of dill setting out front and we couldn't keep it stocked," Joe says. "Then the next year, we put two mini fridges and two tables in there and realized it was cheaper to go to the end of your drive than to drive to Bismarck. So, that's how it started. And now it just keeps getting bigger."

The Sutherlands' farm store is in a unique location, as it reaches many visitors off Highway 3. They see recurring community members getting their weekly items as well as area visitors and lake-goers who make a stop for local treats.

Homemade goodies and more

The Red Barn store offers a variety of goods to purchase. What started with farm fresh eggs and garden produce has expanded to fresh-baked goods, preserved produce, handmade items, animal feed and much more.

Popular items include pickles, pickled beets, salsa, pickled eggs, chocolate chip cookies, monster cookies, scotcheroos, breads, buns and sweet rolls.

Dawn, who has always enjoyed baking and preserving, has used her own recipes as well as tried-and-true family recipes, such as her grandmother's recipe for pickled beets or the sugar cream pie recipe of Joe's grandmother, Cora.

Dawn bakes about four to five times a week to keep the store stocked with sweet treats, fresh bread and snack mixes.

"I usually try to have my sweet rolls down there for Saturday and Sunday mornings, because that's when everybody is able to stop and get their little breakfast treats," Dawn says. "Then, usually on the way home from the lake, they always pop in and snag something."

They have expanded to offer customers more than food, including homemade items like soap, salves, lip balm, jewelry and more.



"I usually try to have my sweet rolls down there for Saturday and Sunday mornings, because that's when everybody is able to stop and get their little breakfast treats." -Dawn Sutherland



Fresh baked goods are one of the items stocked in the farm store.



Cookies and treats are popular items.

"I sell tons of beeswax lip balm," says Dawn. "And our goats milk soap, lotions, salves and ointments work great for those with sensitive skin or eczema."

It takes family and community

Everyone on Dawson Faith Farms has their role to keep the farm store stocked, whether it's making jewelry, baking, delivering products to the store or labeling items.

"I'll tell you what, if I didn't have Joe, he is my biggest supporter," says Dawn. "It takes a family to do it all."

The support of the community has been tremendous to the Sutherlands and their business, from kind notes to returning jars and egg cartons.

"If they stop in and they see us, they're always saying thank you and how much they appreciate having this little building down here," Dawn says.

Joe says although they are not originally from North Dakota, people know exactly where they are, The Red Barn.

"Everybody knows The Red Barn," says Joe. "A lot of people like the flavor of the stuff she makes and a lot of people like the uniqueness of the different things."

What started with a table, a mini fridge and a bucket of dill at the end of the driveway has grown into something much bigger than the Sutherland family ever expected. Dawson Faith Farms is a business, but it is also a reflection of the life and family behind it. Every loaf baked, jar labeled and shelf filled carries a piece of the work shared by the Sutherland family with a community that continues to show appreciation. The red barn has become a place known for homemade food, hard work and the kind of community connection that keeps people coming back. ⚡

MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Ensuring reliability



Travis Kupper

Co-General Manager/CEO

You expect reliable and affordable electric service from your electric cooperative, so how does KEM Electric Cooperative deliver on that promise? A complex network of power generation and tens of thousands of miles of electrical lines work together to ensure enough electricity is available on the coldest winter morning and during the dog days of summer.

What happens when the demand for power overwhelms the ability to provide the electricity? That's a particularly complicated question, given the transition taking place in how electricity is produced and shared across this network.

The key to meeting energy needs so essential to your quality of life is balancing electricity supply with demand. While that may sound simple, a complex web of facilities and organizations work together to make it happen each day.

Regional transmission organizations coordinate, control and monitor the electric grid across several states in a region. Think of them as energy traffic managers on an interstate highway system,

regulating the number of cars – in this case, electricity – and their destination.

Our cooperative is part of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) as the regional transmission organization.

In recent years, organizations such as SPP have issued new requirements for additional generation capacity. These requirements are being put in place to ensure the grid has enough available power, even during extreme conditions.

As a distribution electric cooperative, we don't generate our own electricity, but we purchase it through our generation and transmission (G&T) providers, including Basin Electric Power Cooperative and the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). This means our G&T providers will need to have additional sources of power and are building for the future to ensure we have enough capacity. Ultimately, this has also increased our power costs to ensure reliability.

While these investments come at a cost, they are essential to maintaining the reliable electric service you depend on today while preparing the grid to meet the challenges and energy needs of tomorrow. ⚡



Scan these QR codes
to hear from our power suppliers, Basin Electric and WAPA.



**Basin Electric Power
Cooperative article**



**Western Area Power
Administration article**

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH OPERATIONS

Committed to reliability



Dale Nagel

Chief of Staff/
Line Superintendent

KEM Electric Cooperative continues to invest in a reliable electric system, which means line crews have been busy making upgrades to infrastructure across the service area. These upgrades, such as outage mitigation technology, are diligently planned additions throughout the territory.

Many factors can be involved in an outage, including equipment

accidents, birds and squirrels, as well as weather. Although we do not always have control over what impacts a member's electric service, technology can be installed to mitigate the chances.

Upgrading outage mitigation technology

As upgrades were made throughout the system this summer, crews installed guards on equipment, such as transformers, fuse cutouts and arresters. These updates help reduce outages and blinks while protecting wildlife. Small animals often nest, feed or perch on utility structures, which can be dangerous if they come into contact with exposed conductors or other energized equipment.

Due to the bird migration routes through North Dakota, the cooperative is sometimes required to use additional bird deviation equipment. The bird diverters are installed along the overhead power lines to help birds, such as whooping cranes, notice the lines. This helps prevent bird strikes, which can cause bird deaths as well as blinks or outages for members.

We are committed to protecting wildlife while delivering reliable electric services to our members. As outage prevention technology continues to improve, the installation of protective equipment helps reduce animal-related outages, prevent animal deaths, and minimize power blinks and service interruptions to our members. ⚡



Guards on electrical equipment help keep wildlife safe and reduce outages.

A NOTE FROM MEMBER SERVICES

Operation Round Up helps neighbors



Marcy Sanders

Manager
of Member Relations

Communities are built on neighbors helping neighbors. KEM Electric Cooperative was founded by community members who sought change. Cooperatives are different. Cooperative values reflect dedication to strengthening the communities we serve.

One of the most meaningful ways we live out that commitment is through our Operation Round Up program, which supports community members, organizations and

initiatives locally. By investing in projects that enrich lives, foster opportunity and build stronger communities, we are proud to give back and support the people and organizations working every day to create lasting change.

Apply for Operation Round Up grant

Operation Round Up is a voluntary, charitable program that allows cooperative members the opportunity to round up their electric bill to the nearest dollar. The pennies, dimes, nickels and quarters accumulate in a fund. The funds are then distributed by our Operation Round Up board in the form of grants solely for educational, charitable, safety and scientific purposes.

Over the years, our community-focused programs, food donations and other giving projects have supported local schools and young people, fed hungry families and so much more.

Since 2003, with donations from members, we've helped 419 recipients through this program. This shows small donations over time can collectively make a big impact.

The success of Operation Round Up is a testament to the kindness and generosity of our members. Through their selfless contributions, we can make a real and lasting difference in the lives of those facing challenges in our community.

Our next Operation Round Up grant application deadline is Sept. 30. Visit our Operation Round Up page on our website for details and to apply. ⚡



KEM Electric Operation Round Up giving

\$ 3,950

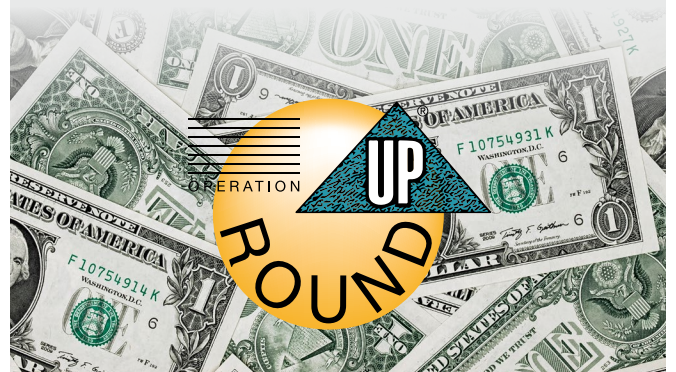
dollars donated in 2025

\$147,707

dollars donated since 2003

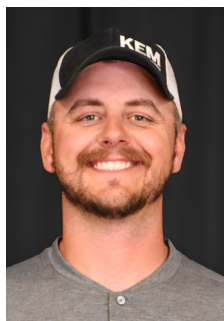
389

donations made to organizations
and individuals



SAFETY STARTS WITH ME

Outdoor electrical safety



Kirk Praus

Journeyman
Lineworker

Fall brings busy days outdoors, whether you're tackling fall projects, preparing for cooler weather or simply enjoying time outside. It is also a good time to look around your home, yard and shop to check for potential electrical safety hazards.

Taking a few simple precautions can help prevent accidents and keep everyone safe. Remember these outdoor electrical safety tips this fall:

- Check extension cords, power tools and outdoor electrical equipment for signs of wear or damage. It is a good time to replace frayed or cracked cords to help prevent shocks and fires.
- Use extra caution when operating electrical equipment near puddles, ponds, livestock waterers or wet grass. Never handle electrical devices with wet hands.

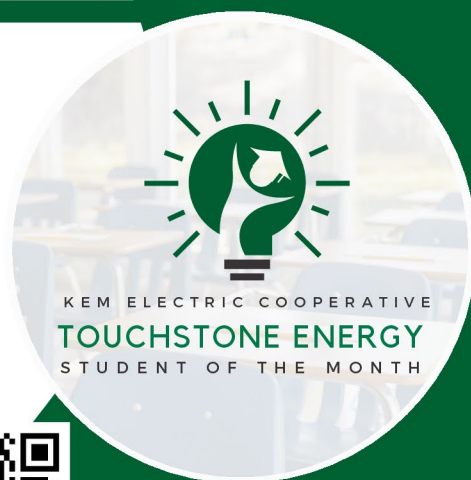
- Be aware of power lines when using ladders, trimming trees, moving equipment or completing outdoor projects.
- Make sure extension cords, outlets, power strips and tools are designed for outdoor use when used outside. Outdoor-rated products are built to withstand weather conditions.
- Never operate a portable generator inside a home, garage, shed or other enclosed area. Keep generators outdoors and away from doors, windows and vents. Always make sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions when operating a portable generator.
- If you notice a damaged utility pole, pad-mounted transformer (the big green box) or downed power line, stay away and contact KEM Electric Cooperative right away. Never attempt to inspect or repair electrical equipment yourself.

Electricity is all around us, and KEM Electric is committed to providing safe, reliable and quality electric service to all of our members. We hope you'll keep these electrical safety tips in mind so you can be aware of hazards before damage occurs. ⚡

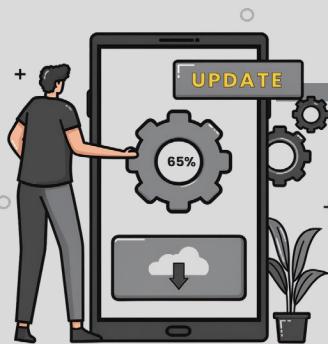
NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN!

Nominate a deserving **Ashley Public School** student for the September KEM Electric Touchstone Energy Cooperative Student of the Month! *The nomination deadline is Sept. 15.*

Scan the QR code for more information.



TIPS FROM THE CO-OP TEAM



SMARTHUB | *Update your information*

Keep your information up to date and ensure KEM Electric can reach you during outages, for capital credits and more. Log into SmartHub to update your contact information.

STAY ALERT | *Downloading apps*

Be cautious when downloading apps. Only use official app stores and check reviews first. Our SmartHub app can be downloaded by visiting your smartphone's official app store.



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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

MANAGEMENT:

Travis Kupper..... Co-General Manager/CEO
 Jason Bentz..... Co-General Manager/CEO

**Report outages to the following toll-free number:
 800-472-2673**

Hazleton, Linton and Strasburg exchanges' phone
 number: 701-254-4666

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday through Friday,
 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Website: kemelectric.com

Email address: info@kemelectric.com

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