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The electric grid powers nearly every part of modern life, but as it becomes more connected and digital, it also faces rising threats from cyberattacks, extreme weather and wildfires. Public power districts and electric cooperatives are strengthening security through national standards, advanced technology, grid hardening and emergency training.

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ON THE COVER

Pole climbing is just one of the educational activities students get to participate in during Youth Energy Leadership Camp. See the related article on Page 6. Photograph by Wayne Price



Wayne Price

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Public Power's Promise of Reliability

Electric power is one of those services most of us only think about when it's gone. Flip a switch, plug in a phone, start the coffee maker — it all works, day after day, often without a second thought. That quiet consistency is no accident. In Nebraska's public power system, reliability is the result of careful planning, constant monitoring, and people who are always on the job, even when the rest of us are asleep.

Behind the scenes, system operators watch the electric grid around the clock. From control rooms across the state, they track power flows, monitor weather patterns, and balance supply with demand in real time. A sudden cold snap, a summer heat wave, or an unexpected equipment issue can change conditions in minutes. Operators are trained to anticipate those shifts and respond quickly, keeping electricity moving safely and smoothly to homes, farms, and businesses.

Out in the field, lineworkers are the most visible face of reliability, especially when storms roll through. High winds, ice, lightning, and heavy snow are part of life in Nebraska, and they all take a toll on power lines and equipment. Public power district and electric cooperative crews spend countless hours inspecting poles, trimming trees, replacing aging components, and making upgrades long before a problem ever occurs. When outages do happen, they work in difficult and sometimes dangerous conditions to restore service as quickly and safely as possible.

Equally important are the planners and engineers who look years into the future. They study growth patterns, technology changes, and evolving energy needs to make sure the system is ready for what's next. That may mean reinforcing substations, adding new transmission lines, or investing in smarter equipment that can detect and isolate problems automatically. These decisions aren't made overnight. They require long-term thinking and careful use of public dollars to ensure reliability remains strong without placing unnecessary burden on customers.

Preparation is also key to emergency response. Nebraska's public power utilities regularly train for extreme events, from major storms to cyber threats, by running mock drills with personnel and equipment. Mutual aid agreements allow crews and equipment to be shared across utility boundaries when help is needed most. That spirit of cooperation is a hallmark of public power and a major reason outages are often restored faster than expected.

Reliability may be invisible when everything is working, but it is always there, supported by people who take pride in keeping the lights on. Nebraska's public power system is built on local control, accountability, and a commitment to serve all Nebraskans. Every plan, every inspection, and every late-night call is part of the promise to deliver power that is safe, dependable, and ready whenever customers need it.



Josh Kautz

Josh Kautz is the General Manager of McCook Public Power District, headquartered in McCook, Neb.

Protecting Communities Beyond The Lines

The moment a switch clicks and a bulb glows bright, few pause to consider what makes that simple act possible or how much work goes into ensuring it happens safely. Behind every electrical line and humming transformer stands a team of highly trained professionals dedicated not only to keeping the grid running, but also protecting the communities that depend on it. For power districts, safety is a commitment woven into every plan, process, tool, and routine adopted, serving to keep both the staff and the public free from injury.

Safety in the electric utility industry starts long before anyone touches a power line. Utility lineworkers, substation technicians, engineers, and other field employees complete multi-year apprenticeship programs that blend classroom instruction with hands-on experience under the guidance of seasoned professionals. Even after completing initial training, workers continue with ongoing education to stay current with evolving industry standards.

Regular tailgates, safety meetings, and emergency mayday drills help keep hazard awareness front and center daily. When accidents or near-misses occur, they are reviewed so procedures and processes can be improved and lessons shared, not only within the organization, but across the industry. This culture of continuous learning is one of the most powerful safety tools a utility can build for its team.

Utility workers face hazards every day that most people never encounter. That is why personal protective equipment is non-negotiable. Arc flash-rated clothing, insulated gloves, and protective eyewear are standard for anyone working near energized equipment. Strict procedures ensure that before any maintenance begins equipment is de-energized, tested for voltage, and secured against any chance of becoming re-energized.

An electric utility must care for the area that lies outside the substation fence as much as for the equipment inside. Safeguarding the people and communities served forms a core part of each district's mission. Crews conduct regular inspections to identify hazards and repair or replace them before dangerous situations occur. Situations such as electrical fires, downed lines, prolonged outages, affecting emergency services, and vulnerable residents.

Public education efforts bring safety awareness directly into neighborhoods and schools. Local utilities partner with local governments and first responders to share guidance on topics such as what to do when a power line falls, how to safely operate a generator during an outage, and how to identify and report utility hazards. First responders also receive specialized training to help them navigate emergency scenes involving energized equipment safely.

Grid modernization investments further protect communities by shortening outage durations, strengthening cybersecurity defenses, and improving a utility's ability to respond to both natural disasters and emerging threats.

Electric utilities are constantly working to keep people safe — even when nobody is watching.

Empowering Our Future Leaders

*at NREA's Youth Energy
Leadership Camp*



Each summer, high school students from across Nebraska have the unique opportunity to explore the world of public power at the Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) Youth Energy Leadership Camp. This year's camp will take place July 20-24 at Camp Comeca, near Cozad, Nebraska, offering an immersive, hands-on experience in electricity, power generation, and the rural electric industry.

Designed to educate, challenge, and inspire, this week-long program blends learning with leadership development and recreation. Students will gain insight into the operations of member-owned public power electric systems while working alongside industry professionals, adult counselors, and junior counselors—former campers who return to take on leadership roles.

Hands-On Learning & Leadership

From day one, campers become active participants in a simulated electric power district, electing a board of directors that oversees operations. The board selects a general manager to facilitate communication between counselors and campers, ensuring smooth decision-making throughout the week. Students can also compete in the Ambassador competition or take on key roles within various camp committees, enhancing their leadership skills and teamwork abilities.

A highlight of the camp includes a tour of Nebraska's energy infrastructure, featuring visits to the Kingsley Hydro Station at Lake McConaughy and the Gerald Gentleman Station, the state's largest coal-fired power

plant at Sutherland.

For those looking to take their experience to the national level, the camp offers an opportunity. Three students from the Ambassador competition will earn a fully funded trip to Washington, D.C., representing Nebraska at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Youth Tour. To be considered, campers

must submit an application, give a self-introduction speech, and deliver a five-minute speech on an assigned topic. Their peers will then vote for the top male and female candidates, along with the next highest vote-getter, to serve as Ambassadors.

The top six finalists will also be invited to return next year as junior counselors.

While the camp is packed with educational experiences, it's also a place for fun and making lifelong friends. Students can participate in basketball, volleyball, and swimming, as well as tackle a rock climbing wall and adventure course. These activities foster teamwork, confidence, and lasting friendships.

How to Apply

This exciting opportunity is open to current high school freshmen, sophomores, and juniors whose families are consumers of NREA member-systems. Camp costs and transportation are covered by sponsoring rural electric systems, making it an accessible and invaluable experience for young leaders interested in energy and leadership.

To learn more or apply for the NREA Youth Energy Leadership Camp, contact your rural electric utility.

**Don't miss
this chance to
spark your
leadership journey
in the energy
industry!**



**July 20-24,
2026**

**To apply, contact
your rural electric
utility. Students
must be freshmen,
sophomores, or
juniors in high
school.**

Opposite: Campers participate in ice-breaker games.

Top left: Campers make S'mores during the campfire.

Top right: A tour of NPPD's Gerald Gentleman Station, near Sutherland, Neb., provides campers with a look at a coal-fired power plant.

Left: Employees of Dawson Public Power District provide a high voltage safety demonstration to campers.

Photographs by Wayne Price

Prepare For Your Future on the NREA Youth Tour

What if you had the chance to travel to Washington, D.C., meet influential leaders, and connect with other ambitious students from across the country—all for free? Sounds too good to be true, right? Well, it's not. The Nebraska Rural Electric Association Youth Tour offers Nebraska high school students an unforgettable, life-changing experience that will help shape your future.

Leaders Aren't Just Born—They're Made

Maybe you've always been the one to step up and take charge. Or maybe leadership isn't something you've thought about before. Either way, great leaders aren't just born with skills—they develop them. Youth Tour is designed to give you the tools, experiences, and confidence to become a leader in your community, career, and beyond.

Each of the 44 states that participate in the program selects one member of their delegation to represent it on the Youth Leadership Council. Members of the council come back to Washington, D.C., for additional leadership development experiences, serve as youth ambassadors at events hosted by their state's rural electric utilities and represent their state at the annual meeting of America's public power districts and electric cooperatives.

What You'll Experience

For one incredible week in Washington, D.C., you'll:

Meet Your Representatives – You'll get the rare chance to visit Capitol Hill and have face-to-face conversations with Nebraska's senators and members of Congress.

Explore National Landmarks – Walk in the footsteps of history as you visit iconic monuments, memorials, and museums.

Make Lifelong Friendships – Connect with more than 1,500 other students from across the country who share your drive and curiosity.

See Democracy in Action – Gain firsthand knowledge of how government works and how you can make an impact.

Why It Matters

This isn't just another school trip—it's an opportunity to expand your world, build leadership skills, and prepare for your future.

Past Youth Tour participants have gone on to become CEOs, elected officials, and community leaders. You could be next.

How to Apply

To be eligible to attend Youth Tour, students must attend the NREA Youth Energy Leadership Camp held each summer in July. The five-day camp is set up to give high school students a better understanding of electric safety, electric power generation and the rural electric program. During camp three students are selected by their peers to serve as Nebraska ambassadors on Youth Tour.

The Ambassador Competition involves submitting an application at Youth Energy Leadership Camp, presenting a self-introduction speech, and delivering a five-minute speech on an assigned topic. Each camper votes for three candidates following the speech with the top male, top female and person with the next highest vote total becoming next year's ambassadors.

To learn more about the NREA Youth Energy Leadership Camp and Youth Tour, contact your rural electric utility or visit www.nrea.org/services/youth-programs.



Photographs by James Dukeshner



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A Little Sunshine in Northeast Nebraska

by Justine Heithoff



Visitors to Niobrara Valley Electric Membership Corporation in O’Neill, Nebraska, are often surprised to find something growing that seems slightly out of place in northeast Nebraska — a thriving orange tree. While the region is known for agriculture and changing seasons, this tree brings a unique history and a small touch of the tropics to the cooperative’s office.

The orange tree has been part of NVEMC for more than 60 years. It was brought to the office by Ed Wilson, the cooperative’s first general manager. In January 1965, Wilson attended the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s annual meeting in Miami Beach, Florida. While there, he discovered small orange tree seedlings being sold for less than a dollar. Wilson purchased one and brought it back to Nebraska, likely never imagining it would become such a long-standing office fixture.

What began as a tree less than a foot tall has grown into a living piece of cooperative history. Over the decades, employees at NVEMC have helped nurture the tree, allowing it to flourish indoors through Nebraska’s changing seasons. Today, it serves as a reminder of the cooperative’s growth and the traditions that connect past and present.

One of the most common reactions comes from members visiting the office for the first time. Many are amazed to see citrus fruit

growing in northeast Nebraska and often stop to admire the tree. Members are welcome to pick some fruit to take with them, making the tree not only a conversation piece but also a small way to share a bit of NVEMC’s history and hospitality with those we serve. As one member

recently shared, “You just don’t expect to see an orange tree in Nebraska. It’s such a neat surprise.”

Another common question visitors ask is whether the oranges

are edible. They are, but they may not taste how people expect. The tree produces small, bright orange fruit that is extremely tart, similar in flavor to a lemon rather than a sweet orange.

The tree is believed to be a Calamondin orange tree, which is primarily grown as an ornamental plant. Calamondin trees are known for blooming year-round and producing dozens of golf ball-sized fruits that look like a cross between a mandarin orange and a kumquat.

Although citrus trees are not commonly associated with Nebraska, Calamondin trees adapt well to indoor environments, making them popular houseplants. Their fragrant blossoms and vibrant fruit add color and brightness, especially during the winter months.

More than six decades after its journey from Florida, the orange tree at NVEMC continues to thrive, which serves as a small but meaningful reminder that even the simplest ideas can grow into lasting traditions.

Calamondin trees adapt well to indoor environments, making them popular houseplants.

Larry's Safety Lesson

Keep your family safe from grass and brush fires

By Larry Oetken



Grass and brush are excellent fuels for fire, making fires involving ground cover and foliage extremely dangerous and destructive.

Grass and brush fires, which are often referred to/generalized as wildfires in the U.S., can travel up to 15.5 miles per hour and can spread to tens of thousands of acres within a few hours of ignition. In North America, the peak season for grass and brush fires is between June and August, but they can occur year-round.

While they are most common in desert areas and locations experiencing prolonged drought, grass and

brush fires can occur anywhere that weather conditions are dry and winds are high.

Grass and brush fires can occur naturally when lightning strikes the ground or when high winds bring down power lines, both of which can cause a spark and ignite a fire. However, 85% of wildfires are caused by humans. The more common causes include burning debris, using hot equipment on grass, improperly discarding cigarettes, leaving campfires unattended and intentionally setting a fire.

Be aware of any Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches issued by the National Weather Service. Never build a campfire, shoot fireworks, burn debris, use a barbecue pit or initiate a controlled burn when warnings are in effect.

Larry Oetken is the Director of Job Training & Safety for the Nebraska Rural Electric Association.



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Privately-Owned Electric Generation

A Key Issue in this Year's Legislative Session

by James Dukesherer, NREA Director of Government Relations

Nebraska prides itself on being the only all-public power state in the nation. There are no investor-owned utilities operating in our state. Every retail electric consumer in Nebraska receives their electricity from a consumer-owned, not-for-profit, electric utility. Despite our status as 100 percent public power, we do have some privately-owned electric generators in our state.

For example, since 2010, Nebraska has allowed the development of privately-owned renewable energy facilities such as wind and solar projects.

There is a bill of interest that is making its way through the legislative process that further expands the opportunity for privately-owned generation in Nebraska. LB 1261 would allow a private company to own and operate a very large thermal generation power plant of at least 1000 megawatts in size. If adopted, this could result in the private ownership of a coal, nuclear, or natural gas power plant in Nebraska.

Our country is experiencing unprecedented global demand for electricity and with this comes an increased demand for new generation. Large industrial loads, which may require thousands of megawatts of power to serve, are looking to locate in Nebraska. These large customers may use more electricity than a city the size of Lincoln. Large, private companies have voiced their desire to bring their own generation assets to Nebraska to meet their company needs. LB 1261 would expand the pool of equipment potentially available to Nebraska by allowing privately-owned generation to be developed. The bill would provide a narrow exception in statute that allows private companies to make the large financial investment that a project of this size requires while



A delegation of public power district general managers watch the Legislature in action at the state capitol.

reducing the potential financial risk to public power utilities and Nebraska's electric ratepayers.

Of utmost importance to the NREA is that LB 1261 not harm our state's public power model or the customers we serve. As drafted, LB 1261 includes a number of provisions intended to protect public power and ensure the continuation of our all-public power

system. LB 1261 requires these privately-owned power plants to be approved by our state's electric regulator, the Power Review Board. The bill explicitly reaffirms the exclusive right of public power to serve all retail customers in their service territory. Although the bill does allow for the private ownership of a generation plant, the electricity generated at that plant will be sold through a power purchase agreement to public power and public power will ultimately continue to serve the end-use industrial customer. The industrial customer is prohibited from reselling electricity, and the privately-owned generation plant can only be used to serve the industrial customer, unless that right is waived by public power. Finally, the industrial customer must pay all the costs of any kind incurred by public power as a result of this project.

While public power will always stand ready to provide electric service for any electric consumers that come to our state, LB 1261 provides a practical alternative to our traditional utility model. Allowing private capital to finance a multibillion-dollar generation unit while protecting the public power model and insulating our customers from the financial risks that a very large industrial customer could pose can be a win-win for both sides.



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By Michael Leitman

Building a More Resilient Grid

The electric grid is the backbone of modern life. It powers homes, businesses and institutions, including hospitals and other critical infrastructure. As the grid becomes more interconnected and digitized, it also faces growing threats ranging from cyberattacks to extreme weather events and wildfires.

Keeping the grid reliable and resilient is essential, and public power districts and electric cooperatives are actively involved in national efforts to secure the electric grid.

Electric cooperatives, other utilities and grid operators follow standards set by organizations like the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), which mandate protections for critical infrastructure, including:

- **Cybersecurity Measures:** Firewalls, encryption and multi-factor authentication help prevent unauthorized access to control systems. Regular software updates and vulnerability scans reduce the risk of exploitation.

- **Physical Security:** Electric substations and control centers are protected with fencing, surveillance and restricted access. Physical breaches or attacks can be just as damaging as cyberattacks.

- **Redundancy and Resilience:** Backup systems and redundant lines ensure power can be rerouted during outages caused by natural events or deliberate attacks. This minimizes disruption and speeds recovery.

Each of these standards creates layers of defense, making it harder for any single failure to compromise the entire grid.

As threats evolve, so do the tools to combat them. New tools including drones, remote sensors and advanced controls allow cooperatives to be more effective in monitoring and responding to a variety of grid threats.

Automated sensors and controls allow real-time visibility across the grid and enable rapid response to emergency conditions, either by a human operator or automated settings. Artificial intelligence (AI) can be a powerful technology to enhance these other tools, especially in sifting through large amounts of data or imagery to detect irregularities or patterns. But to be effective, AI tools must be well designed, properly trained and incorporated into cybersecurity protections.

Public power districts and electric co-ops are also making investments to harden their local systems against the growing threat of wildfires, extreme weather events





and other natural hazards. These investments include identifying vulnerable parts of the grid, replacing wooden poles with metal or cement poles, burying lines underground or adding enhanced technologies that allow greater visibility and control to anticipate and respond to emergency conditions.

Planning for the unexpected is critical.

Utilities and government agencies conduct large-scale exercises to test their readiness for emergencies. One example is GridEx, a biennial event organized by NERC that simulates cyber and physical attacks on the electric grid. Thousands of participants, from utilities to law enforcement, work together to identify weaknesses and improve coordination.

These drills serve two purposes. They expose vulnerabilities before real crises occur, and they build relationships among key stakeholders. In an actual emergency, rapid communication and collaboration can

make the difference between a minor disruption and a widespread outage.

Beyond planning exercises like GridEx, rural electric utilities also create plans and conduct trainings to practice their responses to cyber and physical attacks and natural hazards. For example, as wildfires have become more intense and more common over a larger portion of the U.S., many co-ops are adopting wildfire mitigation plans in conjunction with grid hardening efforts.

So, why does all this matter? A secure electric grid isn't just about keeping the lights on; it's about protecting public health, economic stability and national security in the communities we serve.

By combining robust industry standards, rigorous training and cutting-edge technology, rural electric utilities are helping to build a grid that is not only reliable but resilient today and in the future.

When most people think about saving energy, they picture insulation upgrades, efficient windows and appliance swaps. But your yard can play a major role too. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, a well-planned landscape can reduce air-conditioning costs by up to 25% and pay for itself in less than eight years.

Because landscaping results vary by region, keep in mind that the United States has four main climate zones: temperate, hot-arid, hot-humid and cool. Plant strategically for your zone.



Choose the right trees: Deciduous or evergreen

- Deciduous trees (those that lose their leaves in the winter) block sunlight in the summer and allow light in during the colder months, helping to regulate indoor temperatures year-round.
- Evergreen trees provide consistent shade and can serve as windbreaks, which is especially helpful in cool climates.

Tip: In hot climates, choose native or drought-tolerant species. They require less water and are typically more resilient.

Placement matters

- West and northwest sides: Plant trees to block

strong mid- to late-afternoon sun.

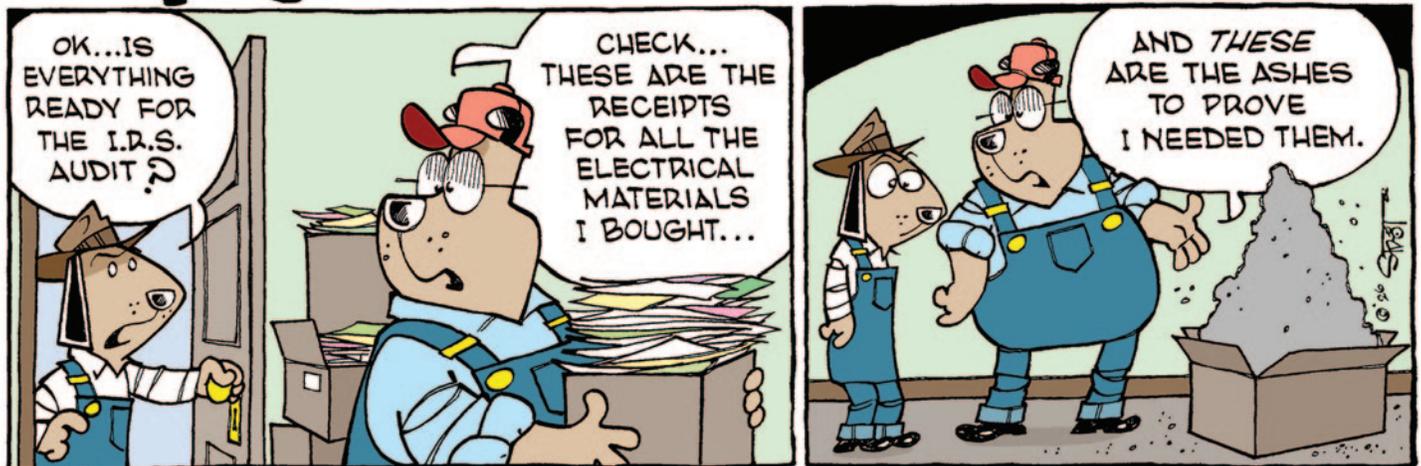
- East and west windows: Use deciduous trees to block summer sun but still allow winter light.
- South side: Tall trees planted at a distance equal to two to five times their mature height can shade your home without blocking winter sun.
- West side: Shorter trees and shrubs help shield against intense, low-angle afternoon sun.
- Patios and driveways: Shade these areas to reduce reflected heat.
- Home perimeter: Bushes can absorb sunlight and reduce heat transfer, but avoid dense plantings in humid climates, where airflow is important to prevent excess moisture.

Tip: Be mindful near solar panels. Avoid planting tall trees on the south side of panels to prevent shade during peak sun hours.

Plan for a tree's mature height

Avoid planting trees that will grow taller than 15 feet near power lines. For taller species, plant at least 20 feet away — 45 feet is even better — to prevent safety hazards and avoid future pruning.

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Electric lawn equipment has seen drastic improvements in cost, motor efficiency and battery power in recent years. From hedge and string trimmers to leaf blowers, chainsaws, and push and riding mowers, there are lots of options for electric lawn equipment.

Electric equipment is quieter than its gas-powered counterparts and typically needs less maintenance. There's no more mixing fuel, changing spark plugs or worrying about gas going bad over the winter. Advances in rechargeable battery technology eliminate having to lug around a heavy extension cord to get your work done. Just pop in a battery and go.

Most popular lawn equipment brands offer battery-powered options, along with newer brands that specialize in electric tools. If you need multiple tools, buying the same brand with the same battery type allows you to swap batteries between different pieces of equipment. That also means fewer battery chargers to store or keep on your workbench.

Opt for equipment with brushless motors. They are more efficient, more powerful and have a longer lifespan than traditional brushed motors. A brushless motor typically costs more but is worth the improved efficiency. A brushed motor transfers electricity using physical brushes, which can wear down over time. The friction caused by the brushes makes equipment run hotter and noisier. A brushless motor uses electronic commutation with less friction,



When you buy the same equipment brand with the same battery type, you can easily swap batteries between different pieces of equipment. Photograph by Miranda Boutelle, Pioneer Utility Resources

which makes it more powerful, extends the lifespan and allows you to get more done on a single charge.

Just as gas-powered lawnmowers require safe storage and handling of gas and oil, battery-powered equipment requires proper care for maintenance, charging and disposal. Always use the manufacturer's original charging equipment, charge batteries on hard surfaces away from anything flammable, and store chargers in a cool, dry place.

Most manufacturers recommend charging batteries only until they reach full capacity instead of leaving them on the charger until you are ready to use them. This helps prevent damage to the battery from

overcharging and heat buildup and reduces potential fire hazards.

Unplug chargers when not in use to avoid energy waste.

Similar to gas and oil, old or damaged batteries should not end up in household garbage and landfills, where they can ignite fires and leak toxic chemicals into soil and groundwater. Instead, recycle them at a big-box store or at a county or city waste management site.

If you're looking for a quieter, more efficient, lower maintenance lawn care routine, rethink your equipment options and consider electric models. If you decide to make the switch, check with your electric utility or state agency for potential rebates.

Sold Nationally for
as much as \$209



Actual Size
38.1 mm

JUST RELEASED!

Cache of 789 1922 Peace Silver Dollars Still Pristine As The Day They Were Struck

No coin embodies the spirit of the 1920s and 30s more than the Peace Silver Dollar. First struck in 1921, the Peace Dollar was a celebration of the end of WWI and was the silver dollar of choice for prohibition bootleggers and bank robbers like John Dillinger and Bonnie and Clyde. The hefty Peace Silver Dollar holds a special place in American history, as the silver dollar helped America through the Great Depression.

It's no wonder collectors and history buffs alike clamor to get their hands on them. That is, if they can get their hands on them.

Last Circulating Silver Dollar

Collectors love "lasts" and the Peace Dollar was the last 90% silver dollar struck for circulation. Little did designer Anthony de Francisci know the legacy he was creating when he designed what has become known as "The King of Prohibition Dollars" but it came to an end 90 years ago when the last circulating Peace Dollar was officially struck and released to the public.

Public Release - Only 789 Coins Available

Rarcoa®, America's Oldest Coin Company, is announcing the public release of 789 of the 1922 Peace Silver Dollar, struck at the iconic "Mother Mint" in Philadelphia, the birthplace of American coinage. Each coin comes in Brilliant Uncirculated condition, pristine as the day they were struck!

Hold 103 Years of American History

Struck in 1922, each coin carries one hundred and three years of American history. Could Al Capone have paid for a load of illegal whiskey with your coin? Or maybe your great-grandfather carried it while storming the beaches of Normandy during World War II before ending up in a small coin shop in Little Rock, Arkansas. Each coin has its own unique history and you can hold 103 years of American history when you buy yours today!



Did you know in
1922 for \$1 you could
make 2 gallons of
whiskey and sell
them for \$6 each?

A Miracle of Survival

Coin experts estimate that only 15%-20% of Peace dollars still survive today due to multiple mass-meltings over the years, particularly in 1980 when the Hunt brothers tried to corner the silver market, shooting silver up to almost \$50 per ounce.

Sold nationally for as much as \$209

This same 1922 Peace Silver Dollar sells elsewhere for as much as \$209. But thanks to Rarcoa's buying power and numismatic expertise, you can own one for as little as \$119, in quantity while supplies last. **That's 90 LESS!**

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HOMETOWN EATS

THE FRONTIER FRAU COZAD, NEB.

On the edge of downtown Cozad, The Frontier Frau is pouring a little taste of Germany into the Nebraska prairie.

The brewery and restaurant opened in July 2024, founded by Amara and Cobus Block. Amara grew up in Brule, Nebraska, and Cobus is from nearby Gothenburg. The couple shared a simple dream: live in a small town, raise a family, and build something meaningful from the ground up.

Amara's brewing journey began in an unlikely place. While attending law school, she received a home brewing kit as a gift. What started as a hobby quickly became a passion. A trip to Munich, Germany deepened her interest. There she discovered the clean, balanced flavors of German Helles and lagers. She returned home determined to master traditional European brewing methods, including the use of distinct yeast strains that shape flavor and aroma.

Today, she sources German hop varieties grown in the Pacific Northwest and imports barley from Germany to maintain authenticity. The result is a rotating lineup of German style beers (Hefeweizen, Dunkel, Rauchbier, Pilsner) that attracts visitors from across the region.

The food is just as important. The Frontier Frau changes its menu twice a year, offering lighter selections in spring and summer and heartier dishes in fall and winter. Traditional wursts are a top seller, including weisswurst, or white sausage. Guests also enjoy sandwiches, pizzas, and large handmade German pretzels that deliver an authentic taste.

The restaurant is open Wednesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., with the kitchen closing at 9 p.m. The early week gives Amara time to focus on brewing and family. The couple, who have one child and another due in April, employ eight to ten mostly part



time staff members.

Members of the Stein Society enjoy access to small batch brews and special perks, adding another layer of community to this growing small town success story.

Photographs provided by Amara Block



Horseradish Mashed Potatoes

- 2 quarts water
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt, divided
- 3 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes, halved
- 1 stick of unsalted butter, cut into 8 slices, divided
- 16 ounces sour cream
- 1/4 cup horseradish, prepared and squeezed of moisture
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 cup chopped chives, plus additional for topping

In saucepan, bring water and 1 teaspoon salt to boil. Add potatoes and boil 15-20 minutes. Reserve 1/2 cup liquid.

Drain potatoes and place in bowl. Add six slices of butter and mash potatoes coarsely.

In medium bowl, whisk together sour cream, horseradish, remaining salt, pepper and chives. Add mixture to mashed potatoes. Add reserved water. Mash to combine.

Transfer to serving bowl and top with remaining butter pieces and additional chives.

Lazy Daisy Devils Food Bunny Cake

Cake:

- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup oil
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 1/4 cups flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 heaping tablespoons cocoa or Nestle's Quik
- 1 1/2 cups boiling water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Frosting:

- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 1/4 cup shortening
- 1/4 cup margarine
- pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Sift all dry ingredients together. Beat eggs, add oil and dry ingredients. Add boiling water and vanilla and mix thoroughly. Use electric mixer on all. Bake in a loaf pan for 35 minutes at 350 degrees. Cool and remove from pan. While the cake is cooling make the frosting by mixing all ingredients together and adding boiling water 1 teaspoon at a time beating with a mixer until fluffy. When the cake has cooled, use a sharp knife to slice ends of cake at an angle, for the bunny face, then frost the cake. While frosting is still soft put coconut all over the cake. Cut 2 pink jellybeans in half for eyes and nose. You will need 4 toothpicks for whiskers; 2 ears cut from stiff white paper or light cardboard. Use a pink crayon to color down the center of the ear. Use white jellybeans for the tail. Make green grass to put around the bunny – coconut in a jar, add a few drops of green food coloring, then shake it together. Put 12 colored jellybeans around the cake.

LaVern Albaugh, Maywood, Nebraska

Glaze for Ham

- 1 20 oz can of pineapple either small chunks, tidbits or crushed
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 heaping Tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 Tablespoon dry mustard

Mix together all ingredients in a medium saucepan. Cook over medium heat until thick. When it comes to a boil, cook for one minute, stirring constantly. Pour the sauce over fully cooked ham or ham slices. Extra sauce can be served on the side. Serve and enjoy immediately. The glaze is also good on pork chops.

Ellen Teter, Bartley, Nebraska

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