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WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS

WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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2005 W. Fulton, P.O. Box 973
Garden City, KS 67846

Great Bend — 620-793-4223

200 10th St., P.O. Box 1446
Great Bend, KS 67530

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Harper, KS 67058

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Scott City, KS 67871

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206 N. Main, P.O. Box 1010
Syracuse, KS 67878

Tribune — 620-376-4231

310 Broadway, P.O. Box 490
Tribune, KS 67879

FROM THE MANAGER

Powering Progress: A year of innovation and impact

As we close the book on 2025, I am proud of the remarkable year Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WEC) has experienced. This year showcased the true power of collaboration, innovation and community — values that continue to define who we are.

A standout achievement was receiving the **2025 DRIVE ELECTRIC UTILITY AWARD**, recognizing WEC's leadership in advancing electric vehicle education and access. This honor reflects far more than technological progress; it demonstrates that meaningful innovation doesn't rely on size or location but on people working together with purpose. It's an accomplishment shared by our entire WEC family — employees, members and partners alike.

Our cooperative spirit also shined brightly through the **2025 POWER THE PANTRY** campaign. Our members helped make history, collecting a **RECORD-BREAKING \$130,203** in cash and food donations for a dozen local food banks. This incredible impact was made possible by the generosity of our members, local businesses, and community partners.

Our board of trustees voted to retire

\$1.25 MILLION IN CAPITAL CREDITS, funds representing margins allocated from 1991, 1992, 1993 and 2024. Eligible members will receive checks by mail, with a minimum payout of \$25. This distribution doesn't impact 2025 margins, as the credits being returned were allocated in previous years, allowing us to continue operating with financial responsibility and stability.

Our **COMMUNITY SOLAR PROGRAM** had its strongest year yet. After reducing the cost per share to \$4, more members than ever were empowered to participate in renewable energy solutions. Contact your local WEC office to participate.

I invite you to explore our **YEAR IN REVIEW** (Pages 12B-12C). We're committed to our mission of **DELIVERING ENERGY FOR LIFE**, and we'll continue to push boundaries, inspire innovation, and lead with cooperative spirit in the year ahead!

UNTIL NEXT TIME, TAKE CARE.



Bruce W. Mueller

TRUSTEE ELECTIONS THIS SPRING

Members of WEC will receive ballots by mail in March to vote for open seats (Districts 1, 2, 4 and 5) on WEC's Board of Trustees. WEC's bylaws allow for two methods for trustee nominations: **NOMINATION BY THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE** and **NOMINATION BY PETITION OF A MEMBER**.

Members can contact WEC to get contact information for their fellow members who represent

their district on the nominating committee. In addition, 25 or more members of WEC can nominate any member as a trustee candidate by petition. Nominations by petition must be received **BY MARCH 8**.

Members with questions or who are interested in either method of nomination should contact Jim McVay, WEC's general counsel, at 620-793-4223 or jmcvay@weci.net to express their interest.

POWERFUL NUMBERS FROM 2025

These numbers tell an impressive story for 2025. We reached a new giving record — **\$130,203** for **POWER THE PANTRY** — and earned **A NATIONAL RECOGNITION** as Plug In America's **2025 UTILITY AWARD WINNER** of the year! It's a year of **POWERFUL NUMBERS** that reflect the **PRIDE, PROGRESS** and **PURPOSE** of a member-owned cooperative like ours, committed wholeheartedly to the communities we serve!

600+ **215**

INDIVIDUAL CHARGING SESSIONS

UNIQUE DRIVERS

WEC put southwest and central Kansas on the national EV map with the installation of public charging stations in Garden City, Great Bend and Harper. These efforts to expand EV access and infrastructure played a key role in our selection as a 2025 Drive Electric Award winner.



2025 UTILITY AWARD WINNER

Plug In America, a leading national organization dedicated to advancing electric vehicle adoption, honored WEC as the 2025 utility of the year. WEC stood out among a large field of utilities from across the country — including major investor-owned utilities with millions of customers — to earn the prestigious **DRIVE ELECTRIC AWARD**, a recognition typically reserved for large utilities in major metropolitan areas.



67%

OF THE TOTAL DONATIONS collected through Power the Pantry — supporting a dozen local food pantries — were cash contributions.

\$130,203

(\$1=1 LB. OF FOOD) WAS RAISED TO POWER THE PANTRY!

This is the third year WEC committed \$50,000 to kickoff our annual food drive campaign.



1 NRECA GOLD SPOTLIGHT ON EXCELLENCE AWARD

WAS EARNED BY OUR MEMBER SERVICES TEAM FOR THE 2024 DINE & DRIVE!

The event brought co-op members in Great Bend together for lunch and hands-on learning about our renewable energy programs, like Community Solar, in our outdoor green space. Attendees got behind the wheel of three on-site EVs — to experience the power of driving electric firsthand!



10,000 FOLLOWERS

That's the milestone WEC's Facebook page reached and, to celebrate, we're giving away 10,000 kilowatt hours to one lucky co-op member. Visit our website or **FOLLOW US** on Facebook to learn more!

\$1.25 MILLION IN CAPITAL CREDITS

Were approved by the WEC Board of Trustees in December to be distributed to eligible members from 1991, 1992, 1993 and 2024. Checks, which members will receive this month, must have totaled \$25 or more to be sent. In December, co-op staff also welcomed members with sweet treats during our Holiday Open House, held across all seven district offices!

97

CHILDREN SPONSORED

WEC trustees and employees sponsored children through Saint Francis Ministries' Christmas for Kids and also awarded a \$1,000 Sharing Success grant to fulfill additional wish lists for foster children across our service territory.



American Customer Satisfaction Index

92 OUT OF 100

That's the ACSI® score that WEC received for member satisfaction, placing us in the top 5% of scores across the nation last year!



300+ MEMBERS

Attended our Great Bend Chamber Business After Hours on June 4 at Dry Lake Brewing for a "Cherry Hot!" evening of networking, fun and new connections.



\$14,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS

Were distributed to 14 outstanding high school seniors across WEC's service territory at our 2025 annual meeting.



49

SAFETY DEMOS

Given to educate the public, including school-age children and critical first responders, like EMTs and firefighters, regarding safety around power lines.

GOAL EXCEEDED!

\$130,203

A RECORD YEAR OF

POWER*the***PANTRY****\$32,742**

Tyson

\$130,203 raised for 12 local food pantries

Thanks to the combined efforts of our members, businesses and community partners, this year's **POWER THE PANTRY** campaign raised an outstanding **\$130,203 IN CASH AND FOOD DONATIONS** to support 12 local food pantries. Over the past 11 years, Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WEC) has helped collect more than **279 TONS OF FOOD** — 558,183 pounds — in total (\$1=1 pound) from this community service project!

Since 2014, WEC has rallied communities across southwest and central Kansas each fall to support local food banks through Power the Pantry (formerly Cram the Van). For nearly a decade, the campaign featured community gatherings, school competitions, and in-person collection events featuring a large, red extended-passenger van used to collect food donations. Beginning in 2023, with the blessing of our board of trustees, the initiative evolved to better meet the needs of food pantries by shifting toward cash-focused support and establishing a pledge of **\$50,000 ANNUALLY** from our cooperative.

In 2025, for the third year in a row, we worked to **DOUBLE THE IMPACT** of that pledge by aiming to raise \$100,000 for the many food pantries that serve as a vital

THESE MONETARY DONATIONS WERE DELIVERED TO THE FOLLOWING FOOD BANKS JUST BEFORE THANKSGIVING:

- ▶ **ARGONIA** — Argonia Food Pantry (\$515)
- ▶ **CALDWELL** — Caldwell Food Bank (\$5,225)
- ▶ **CONWAY SPRINGS** — Conway Springs Mission Mart (Cardinals Care partnership \$5,664 plus 2,063 food items)
- ▶ **FINNEY COUNTY** — Emmaus House (\$6,095) and Genesis Family Health (\$5,635)
- ▶ **GREAT BEND** — Community Food Bank of Barton County (\$17,332), plus 10,944 lbs. of food
- ▶ **HARPER** — Harper Mission Mart (\$5,675)
- ▶ **HOLCOMB** — First Baptist Church (\$4,255)
- ▶ **LEOTI** — Wichita County Food Bank (\$7,055)
- ▶ **SCOTT CITY** — Hope's Closet/Ministerial Alliance (\$14,700)
- ▶ **SYRACUSE** — Hamilton County Food Pantry (\$7,135)
- ▶ **TRIBUNE** — Greeley County Food Bank (\$8,515)



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2



3



4



5



6

safety net across our service territory — an ambitious goal our communities not only met but exceeded for the second year in a row!

Through a months-long online fundraising campaign featuring a **SUNFLOWER SHOWDOWN** (KU vs. K-State) ticket drawing, monetary donations from co-op members across our seven districts, employee donations, a spirited school competition in Great Bend, a collaborative student-driven food drive in Conway Springs, and our **SEVENTH ANNUAL CO-OPS CARE CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT** held Sept. 26, we achieved a remarkable \$130,203 total (\$1=1 pound) in this record-setting campaign!

As both the campaign and community support have grown over the years, our focus has continued to shift toward **CASH DONATIONS**, which offer the greatest impact. Monetary contributions reduce waste, eliminate storage burdens, and give food pantries the flexibility to purchase perishable items — such as meat and cheese — or provide grocery vouchers directly to families, according to food pantry directors.

In addition to these cash contributions, food items collected through the **GREAT BEND SCHOOLS**

COMPETITION, sponsored by Gifting Forward (10,944 pounds), and the **CARDINALS CARE CHALLENGE** in Conway Springs (2,063 items of food) were delivered to local food banks in November. We also extend a special thank-you to **TYSON FRESH MEATS**, which generously donated \$32,742 worth of **HONEY TURKEY DELI MEAT**, providing high-quality, protein-rich options for families ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday.

"This year's results show what's possible when communities come together with a shared purpose," said Alli Conine, director of member services and corporate communications. "Exceeding our goal means local food banks will have the resources they need to better serve families, and we're honored to be a part of that impact."

As we continue to uphold the **SEVENTH COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE: CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY**, we are inspired by the compassion and dedication demonstrated by our co-op members, trustees, employees and community partners. Together, we aim to help ensure families across our service area have access to the essential food resources they need, especially around the holiday season. Thank you for helping us Power the Pantry in 2025!



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WEC employees hit the road just before Thanksgiving to deliver Power the Pantry donations, supporting a dozen local food pantries — eight of which are pictured here — that serve communities throughout our southwest and central Kansas service territory.

1. Caldwell
2. Great Bend
3. Emmaus House (Finney County)
4. Harper Mission Mart

5. Argonia
6. Conway Springs
7. Tribune
8. Scott City

Great Bend Students Step Up!

Four schools earn honors in friendly school competition to Power the Pantry

For the 11th year in a row, students in Great Bend rallied together in the spirit of generosity — this time collecting a remarkable **10,944 POUNDS** in food and cash donations for the **COMMUNITY FOOD BANK OF BARTON COUNTY** through Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s (WEC) annual **GREAT BEND SCHOOLS COMPETITION**.

During the last week of October, students from **11 AREA SCHOOLS**, their families, school staff and others embraced the friendly challenge and delivered an outstanding response. And WEC employees helped collect and deliver donations to the food pantry in Great Bend just before Thanksgiving, helping ensure local families receive essential support during the holiday season.

Thanks to the ongoing support of **GIFTING FORWARD**, the top four schools received a total **\$1,500 IN CASH AWARDS**, recognizing their outstanding per-student contributions and celebrating the leadership, creativity and compassion demonstrated by students across the district, too.

This year's donation brings Great Bend's **POWER THE PANTRY** total to more than 103,000 pounds — over **51 TONS** of food and monetary contributions collected since 2014. What started as a simple school challenge has grown into a cherished annual tradition and a powerful example of how students and their families can drive meaningful change in their own communities.

"We are continually inspired by the heart our students and their schools bring to our school competition every fall," said Alli Conine, director of member services and corporate communications for WEC. "Each year, they show us how small acts of kindness can multiply into extraordinary impact for local families. We're deeply grateful for the generosity of these students, their families, school staff — and for the ongoing support of Gifting Forward, whose partnership makes this effort possible."



Central Kansas Christian Academy (CKCA) celebrated a first-place victory in the Great Bend Schools Competition, collecting an incredible 28.13 pounds of food per student! Their outstanding efforts were rewarded with a \$600 cash prize from Gifting Forward.



Golden Belt Home Educators (GBHE) earned an impressive second-place finish in the Great Bend Schools Competition, collecting 17.43 pounds of food per student! Their hard work paid off with a \$400 cash prize from Gifting Forward.



Lincoln Elementary School proudly claimed third place in the Great Bend Schools Competition, collecting an impressive 12.92 pounds of food per student! Their efforts earned a \$250 cash prize, generously provided by Gifting Forward.

Holy Family School secured fourth place in the Great Bend Schools Competition, raising an impressive 10.38 pounds of food per student! Their efforts earned a \$250 cash prize, generously sponsored by Gifting Forward.



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MORE ENERGY TO YOUR LIFE?

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A Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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WHEATLAND ELECTRIC CO-OP

CYLC

COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP
MAKE YOUR OWN PATH

JULY 10-16, 2026

COMMUNITY
Form a candy cooperative, lead camp activities, and connect with students from electric cooperative communities in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming.

LEADERSHIP
Learn about the cooperative business model, strengthen leadership skills, and hear from nationally recognized speakers.

MEMORIES
Raft the Colorado River, tour a power plant, and compete with your small group in fun activities. You'll be sure to make memories to last a lifetime.

APPLY NOW



MAKE THE MARK!

YOUTH TOUR
NRECA

June 13-19, 2026
A week of building memories, skills, leadership and friendships that will last a lifetime!

Experience the trip of a lifetime with Youth Tour!
Wheatland Electric will sponsor two high school juniors on an inspiring Washington, D.C. trip to build leadership skills and lifelong connections!

Deadline: Jan. 12, 2026
www.weci.net/youth-tour-program



SAFETY
TIP OF THE MONTH

This time of year, we can experience extremely cold temperatures. When the wind chill is significant, cover as much exposed skin as possible. Your body's extremities, such as the ears, nose, fingers and toes lose heat the fastest. Always wear warm and waterproof footwear whenever dealing with these conditions. Leave early to give yourself extra time to reach your destination.

Happy New Year!

From our co-op family to yours,
wishing you a peaceful new year!

**OUR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED
AT 1 P.M. CT ON DEC. 31,
AND ALL DAY ON JAN. 1, 2026.**

SENIORS! 

APPLY NOW FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Apply online by Jan. 12!

✓ **Who is eligible to apply?**
Graduating high school seniors planning to attend a college or trade school for the 2026-2027 school year.

✓ **Must attend one of 13 high schools in Wheatland Electric's service territory:**
Argonia, Caldwell, Chaparral, Conway Springs, Deerfield, Great Bend, Greeley County, Holcomb, Norwich, Scott County, South Haven, Syracuse, Wichita County.

ONE AT-LARGE SCHOLARSHIP is also available for a senior who doesn't attend these schools but whose parent/legal guardian receives our electric service!
Apply online at www.weci.net/scholarship-program

